

# MODERN DRUMMER®

SEPTEMBER '90

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### WINARD HARPER

### BUDGIE Of Siouxsie & The Banshees

### PRODUCERS ON DRUMMERS

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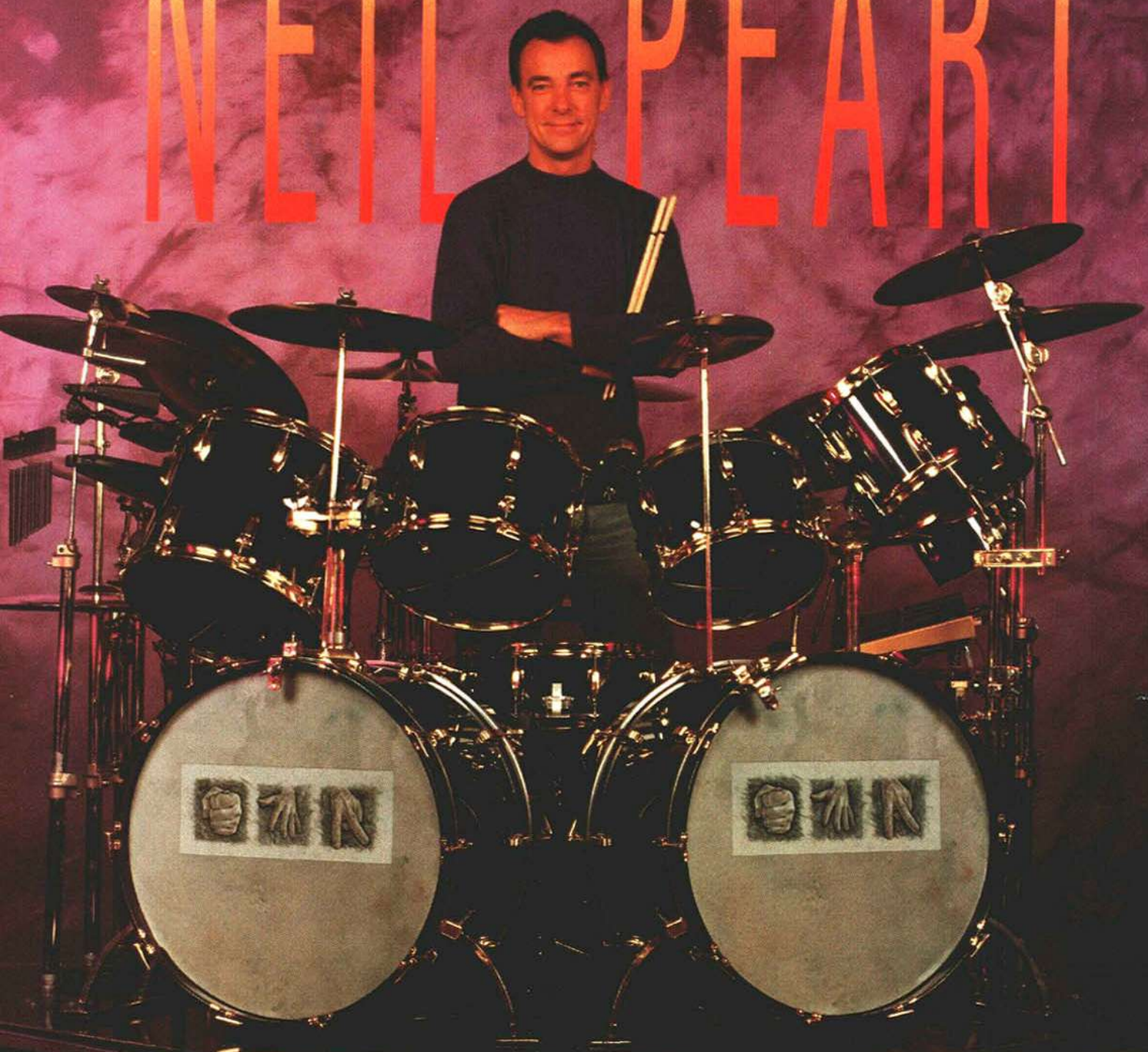


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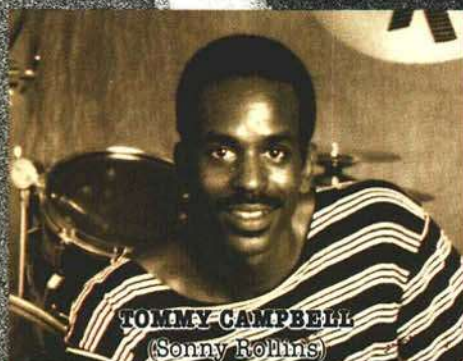
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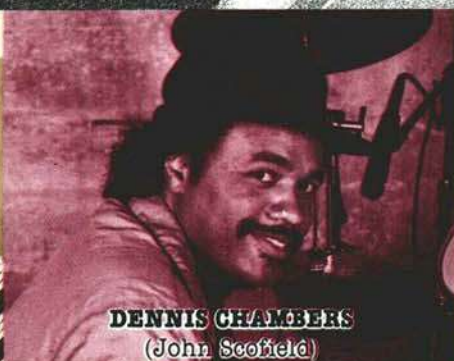
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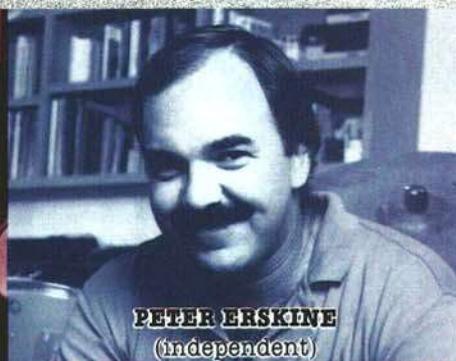
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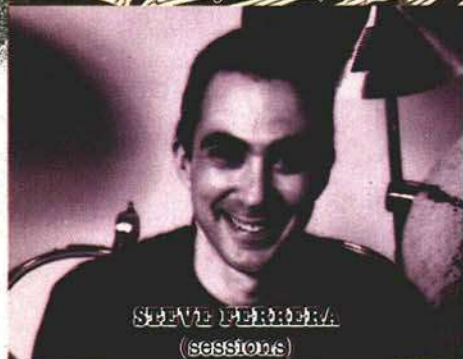
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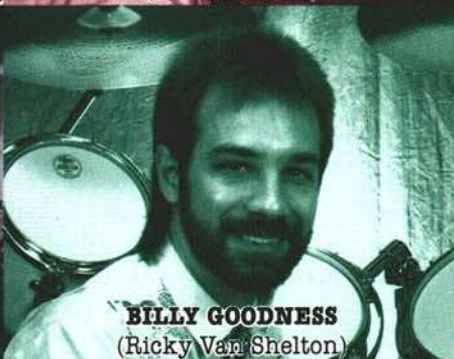
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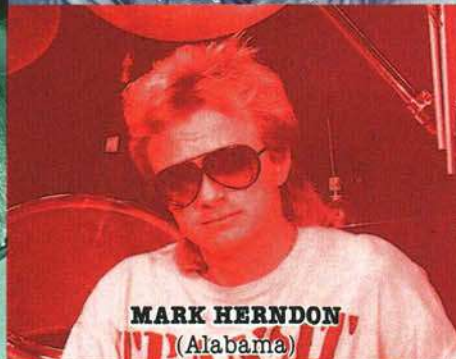
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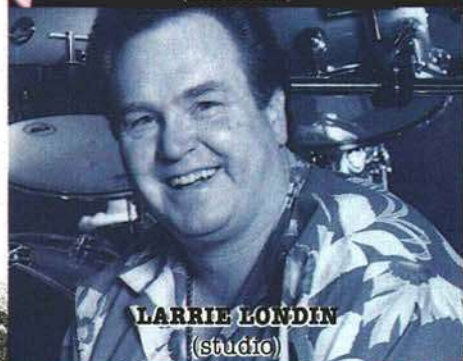
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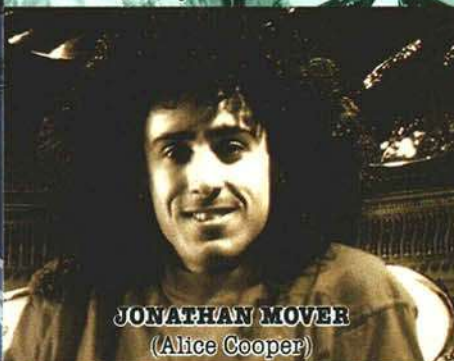
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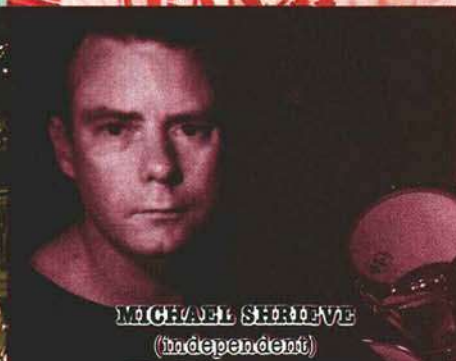
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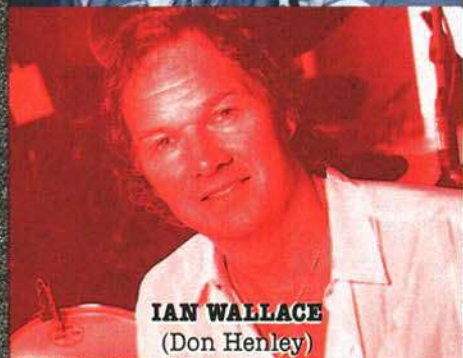
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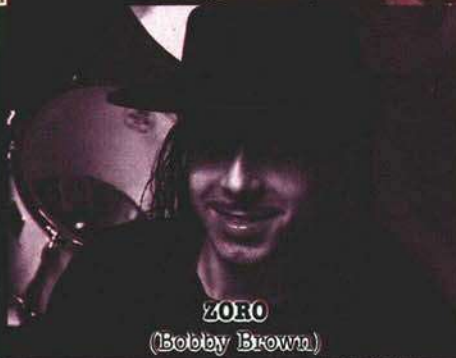
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(Bobby Brown)

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# Content

## FEATURES

### DAVE WECKL

When one of the top drummers on the planet has his first solo album out, and is touring behind Chick Corea's hottest record in years, you can bet he's got a few things to talk about. In this interview, Weckl certainly does discuss the above, plus a few of the other situations he's encountered since the last time we chatted.

•by Rick Mattingly

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### WINARD HARPER

Who says bop is dead? Winard Harper has all but proven otherwise, as his band, the Harper Brothers, has risen to the top of the jazz charts with their unique take on contemporary bop. Here Winard discusses his love for the form, plus his work with Betty Carter, Carmen McRae, Abdullah Ibrahim, and other jazz greats.

•by Bill Milkowski

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### BUDGIE

Siouxsie & the Banshees drummer Budgie had a field day with the band's latest spin-off project, the Creatures' *Boomerang* album. In this interview, Budgie explains how one drummer and one singer can create a strong pop record based on rhythms from the drumset, marimbas, and other tools of percussion.

•by Adam Budofsky

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### PRODUCERS ON DRUMMERS

What do today's top producers expect from drummers in the studio? In this exclusive feature, MD posed this and other important questions to four of the music business's most-respected producers: heavy metal's Tom Werman, pop music maven Russ Titelman, country music's Josh Leo, and jazz expert Jeff Weber.

•by Robyn Flans

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## EDITOR'S OVERVIEW



# A New Look



Photo by Lori Spagnardi

If you've noticed something about this issue of *Modern Drummer* that looks different from previous months—it's not your imagination. We've actually undergone what's known as a graphic redesign.

As many of you know, we've maintained the same basic look for several years now. Sure, we've made subtle changes here and there over the years to keep the magazine fresh. However, this is the first time we've made any type of major design change since we began publishing in 1977. And though we never felt there was anything inherently wrong with our old look—nor did we ever hear any complaints about it—we *did* feel it was time for a face-lift.

One of the first things you'll probably note is our somewhat larger logo. While there's always a slight risk in even a minor alteration to a logo with a high degree of recognition, nearly every major publication does revamp its logo at some point. After nearly 15 years, we simply felt the time was right for us. The modified logo, together with a totally redesigned cover, we think gives the magazine greater impact and presence.

As you work your way through this issue you'll see several other changes, some subtle—some not so subtle. A newly designed Table Of Contents page, a more open, airy feel in the feature article section, new department headers, a re-formatted column layout, and a brand new headline and body type are just a few of the changes we've made.

Since redesigning tends to be a very important step for any established publication, it's a procedure generally assigned to an outside firm. The credit for our redesign goes to nationally-known magazine designer Greg Paul, of Brady & Paul in Boston. My personal thanks go to Greg for the endless hours of meetings, months of work at the drawing board, and his very *special* interest in this project.

For those who may be concerned, none of this means we've altered the editorial format of *MD* in any way. According to regular reader surveys, our long-established editorial formula still meets the specialized needs of our readers. Therefore, we see no reason to change it. We'll certainly be continuing our in-depth feature story approach, our total industry coverage, and the presentation of valuable insights on improving your drumming through our wide column roster. All that's really changed is the *packaging*.

Though we're pleased with the redesign, we certainly expect we'll hear from some readers. Change—particularly in publishing—always results in *some* negative feedback, no matter how carefully planned and executed. We welcome your thoughts. To those who like what we've done here, well, there's nothing more satisfying to us than hearing from readers who appreciate the effort that's been made. Please don't hesitate to let us know what you think either way.

*RS*

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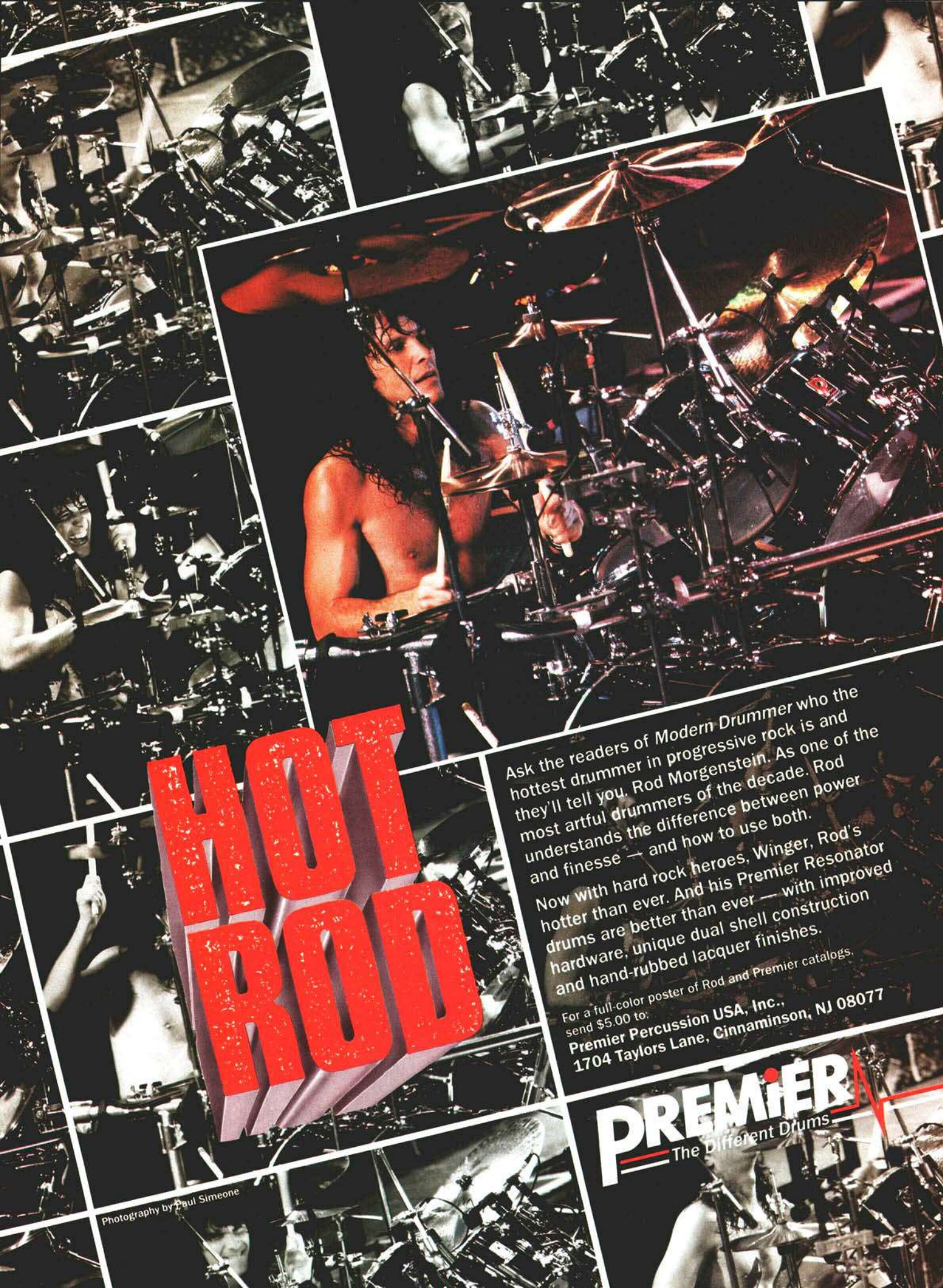
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## READERS' PLATFORM



### Terry Bozzio

I am *very* excited about the articles/editorials and product reviews in the June '90 issue! This is *the best coverage yet* (in many months). Please keep up the great work you have started with this issue!

David Harris  
Kansas City MO

Can you tell me where I can get a Terry Bozzio nose fob? I have a problem: my nose falls off when I solo, and this would certainly be the answer to my predicament.

Dr. Lamar DuBois  
Denton TX

### Mel Lewis

I've just finished reading the June '90 issue and was greatly moved by the fine tribute to Mel Lewis by Rick Mattingly. Mel was a true original and stylist. I never saw anyone play the way he played. At times it almost seemed awkward and wrong, but, for Mel Lewis, it was right. And the sound he had was unlike anybody else's. He was a friend and he will be terribly missed. Congratulations on a very moving tribute to a great artist.

Butch Miles  
Albuquerque NM

### Honored Educators

Budding and established artists alike are quick to cite the superstars that influenced them, too often overlooking the mentors

that lead them through their weekly lessons. Congratulations to EPPI award winners Carlson, Duff, and Gaber [*Industry Happenings*, June '90 MD] for the recognition they so richly deserve.

John Atkinson  
Manhattan Beach CA

### Correction From Max

The *Update* entry in the June issue, by Robert Chancellor, referred to me as the "ex-drummer of the E Street Band." This is not accurate, as the E Street Band has not broken up. Also, although it is true that I am studying law, I do not recall ever saying or implying to Mr. Chancellor that I was giving up performing. I'd like to take this opportunity to set the record straight.

Max Weinberg

### Non-drummer Interviews

Looking over the (as usual) excellent May issue of *MD*, I was very impressed by your decision to interview several non-drummers and accept their ideas on the role and sound of drums. I am referring to your interviews with Don Henley (though only he would refute himself as a drummer) and Jean-Luc Ponty, and the Bob Ezrin quotes from the Jason Bonham interview. I enjoy talking and reading about drums as much as anyone, but I must acknowledge that most of my input on drumming has come not from other drummers, but

principally from other musicians with whom I work—notably guitarists.

I hope to see more input not only from drummers, but from those who most strongly affect and are affected by drummers, including other musicians, bandleaders, sound techs, booking agents, record producers, and—perhaps most importantly—audience members. Keep up the wonderful work!

Jerry Griffin  
Oklahoma City OK

### Hearing Problems

I'm 21 years old and have been playing the drums for seven years. Through this time, I've been a regular reader of *MD*. Your magazine has helped me in several ways, through interviews, advertisements, and various articles relating to the problems a drummer must face. *Modern Drummer* has covered virtually every aspect of a drummer's life except one: ear damage.

After seven years of playing the drums, I'm suddenly facing a drummer's nightmare. I have a very serious ear problem that most people haven't heard of: hearing sensitivity. This is not hearing *loss*, but rather hearing *gain*. Sounds that were once quiet are now loud. One can see that this problem makes it very difficult to deal with the loud sounds of the drums. I've tried muffling the drums; I've tried playing softly. No matter what I did, my ears would scream for help. It is now impossible for me to play the drums without ear protection,

continued on page 86

## The sound of different drummers.



Bobby Blotzer

Dave Garibaldi

Alex Acuña

Tommy Aldridge

Ralph Humphrey

Dave Weckl

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# "I personally stand behind every LP product. That's why I put my name on the label."



*Martin Cohen and Marc Quiñones (Spyro Gyra) discussing product development*

**M**aking fine percussion products involves many manufacturing processes and lots of little trade secrets that I learned from working in the shop, as well as taking prototypes to clubs for testing, and sending them around the world with touring bands.

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President  
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## UPDATE



### Kevin Cloud

When Jack Mack & the Heart Attack completed the run of *The Late Show*, the band began their long-awaited album. "It's a lot different than the first album," explains drummer Kevin Cloud. "Jack Mack is always going to be mainstream R&B, but there are definitely some pop influences on this album, which I believe was needed to bring it into the '90s."

"What's tough is nowadays drummers aren't really expected to go in and cut their drums without a click, so I really didn't do anything live on this album except maybe 'Whiter Shade Of Pale.' Everything else I had to do to a sequence or a click, and it was usually just me playing alone with a sequence or me and the bass playing to a sequence."

Now that Kevin is working on *The Byron Allen Show*, he

says of *The Late Show*, "I think Jack Mack brought a little something different to television. The band had been together for seven or eight years, and that's obviously something you can't replace—no matter how good the players are. On that show, we did a lot of Jack Mack songs and then some old R&B, like James Brown and Otis Redding, but Jack Mack's versions of it."

"On *The Byron Allen Show* we do a lot of Terry Wollman's music. He's the musical director, and he had a Grammy nominated album out. This is much more pop/R&B than Jack Mack."

And then we've gotten to play with guests like Jermaine Jackson and Anita Baker. I'm really enjoying it," he says, explaining that they tape twice a week, rehearsing the morning of each taping, which leaves him a lot of time to



work out of town with Jack Mack & the Heart Attack, as well as on his own music.

"I've invested a lot of money and time into my own studio at my house," Kevin explains. "As a drummer, it's really tough to find security, but if you write a song and you get lucky enough to get residuals, that's a great way to get that security. I've placed a couple of my songs on the TV series *In The Heat Of The Night*, and I have some stuff coming out in a movie. The show has been a good outlet, too, because when I have songs, I just give them to the artists when they come on. My main thing is melody and lyrics, and then I co-write with my brother Keith. Having that outlet is very important to me. If there was one thing I could do over again, I would learn piano. Knowing theory and melody can only help the way we approach the drumset."

Robyn Flans

### Clayton Cameron

Clayton Cameron turned a few heads at the Winter NAMM show, sparring with Ed Thigpen with brushes on a snare drum until an awestruck crowd had gathered to watch the duel. In fact, Cameron has recently completed an instructional tape on brushes called *The Living Art Of Brushes*, which he hopes to distribute himself.

"Brushes is something I've had an affinity for ever since I was 14," says Clayton. "I worked in a lounge in Las Vegas with a jazz pianist, and they didn't like you to be loud in the hotel. It took me about a month before I realized it was a waste of time to play with sticks, so for eight months I played three sets a

night, all night, with brushes only. It helped develop what I call the 'sweeping motion.' Then after I got on the road with Sammy Davis, Jr., I started hearing a lot of the greatest tap dancers. I owe all the percussive and rhythmic things I do on brushes to them."

Cameron had been working with Sammy Davis, Jr. for six years, last year touring 16 countries with Davis, Liza Minnelli, and Frank Sinatra, until Davis' bout with cancer halted the tour. "When I first started the gig, it was kind of stressful in a sense, because Sammy didn't rehearse everything he would do in a show. It would have been impossible, because his repertoire of music extended years on back to all the standards—like Cole Porter and the great arrangers

and writers. The whole thing was not so much about knowing every tune; it was more about getting used to how he operated. He would get on stage and feel what the audience was like to determine what the show would be like. George Rhodes, Sammy's conductor who passed away three years ago, told me in the beginning, 'Sammy likes to sing behind the beat, so don't listen to him; don't even worry about him.' And he was absolutely right. Sammy would do these great phrases, but they'd be all over the bar. I got used to that, but in the beginning, there was never a moment I could relax."

How did he deal with the stress? "I used to go home with headaches all the time," Clayton laughs. "But it was

the gig. His whole thing was that the arrangements were beautiful, and my job was just to keep a groove and set things up. There was one number that he and I did together, where he would turn around and sort of get me going. We would do this whole medley of tunes, just he and I, and I would just keep a groove and follow him dynamically. But his whole thing was singing a cappella, going through all these tunes and key changes. It was just amazing how he did it. That was one of my favorite things to do with him."

Since Sammy's passing, Clayton is keeping busy working around L.A., recently doing some tracks with Hubert Laws.

Robyn Flans



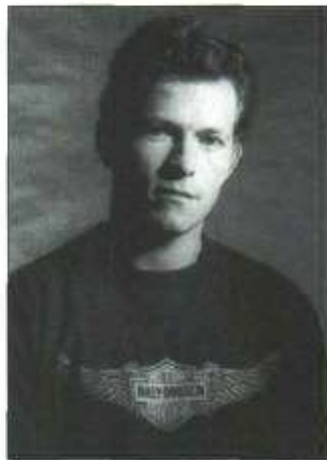
## Dave Palmer

One of the most eagerly awaited tours earlier this year was the live debut of the The, led by British singer/songwriter/social critic Matt Johnson, and propelled by drummer Dave Palmer. Johnson had put out two previous albums under the band's moniker, *Soul Mining* and *Infected*, but it was the latest release, *Mind Bomb*, that convinced him to take the The out on the road. Consequently, the band, which also features bassist James Eller and ex-Smiths guitarist Johnny Marr, "premiered" material that is in some instances seven years old. "It's a good situation, because there's been no precedent set," explains Palmer. "Nobody had any

ideas that had been tried and tested before, so we could do interesting things with the arrangements."

One difference between *Mind Bomb* and earlier the The recordings is that the latest album is a bit warmer and more inviting, part of which was accomplished through the use of subtler dynamics. Palmer made his contribution in the effort by employing brushes, notably on the track "August And September," featuring a guest vocal by Sinéad O'Connor. "I was looking forward to recording that, because Matt said he wanted it to be very intimate," says Palmer. "With sticks you either have to push them back in the mix or send them in reverb if you want them not to stand out so much. Some-

times playing with sticks can give you less expression than a pair of brushes can. I had previously gotten a chance to use them on Julian Cope's *My Nation Underground* album and on Kirsty MacColl's *Kite*."



In addition to those two projects, Palmer is also working in a group called Heat, which features the The's Marr and Eller. "That project came from Johnny and James and me talking a long time ago. It's a Sly & the Family Stone type of idea, with lots of different people on it, including different lyricists. It's similar in some ways to the The, but a bit more wild, more left field." In addition to past recording and touring with ABC, Paul Young, the Art of Noise, and Ryuichi Sakamoto, Palmer more recently worked on the single "Getting Away With It" by Electronic, featuring New Order's Bernard Sumner.

Adam Budofsky

## Zoro

Zoro and Lenny Kravitz have been best friends for over a decade, so when Kravitz was putting a band together to support his debut Virgin record, nothing could please Zoro more than being offered the drum seat. He went straight to Kravitz from Bobby Brown, beginning rehearsals in May of '89 in New York. In fact, says Zoro, he and his wife moved to New York, and the whole band lived with Kravitz and his wife, actress Lisa Bonet.

"It's the first time I've ever worked with a band I actually lived with, where I'd go to

rehearsal and they'd be there, and then I'd go to the kitchen—and they'd be there, too."

In the beginning, Kravitz wanted Zoro to copy the drumming on the album, which he had actually done himself. "His music was totally different from anything else I had been playing, although I play all styles of music. What I did was learn his whole musical concept and really get a feel for where his stuff was coming from. I classify his thing as rock 'n' soul. It has the soul of Curtis Mayfield or Sly Stone and the rock feel of the Beatles or Led Zeppelin. I learned the whole record the

way he played it. Every lick he's got on the record is there for a reason, so he wanted the whole band to learn everything like it was. That way we would know his music so well that we could build on it from there for the live thing. Now we have the perfect combination of his music and how the band interprets it. He just wants me to get looser and looser and go wild, and for the first time in a long time, I really get to play what I call "drums." I don't use any electronics, which I love. I was using a lot of samples and triggers on the Bobby Brown stuff, and that was perfect on that music. But with Lenny I

tapered my set down from a huge set to a basic acoustic kit with four pieces.

"A lot of the show is left totally free," Zoro continues. "There's a tune on the album called 'Fear,' which we usually end our shows with. How we get into the song is left totally open. One night it will be an African 6/8 feel, the next night it will be a loose, rock 'n' roll/jazz, Miles Davis fusion feel, and the next night it will be completely different. We play a two-hour show, and he only has one album. We take the music out and have a really good time musically, which doesn't happen that much."

Robyn Flans

## News...

**Ricky Lawson** keeping very busy with a date with Michael Paulo in Hawaii, where he did a clinic and then gave some lessons at a musical facility. He also performed with George Duke, Bonnie Raitt, Anita Baker, and Natalie Cole at a benefit for Nelson Mandela, played on recent records for Anita Baker and Kenny Loggins, and has been producing Karen Coleman.

**Ron Thompson** was seen on-camera in last spring's release of *Daddy's Dying, Who's Got The Will?*, where he played—what else—a musician. Lately he's been working with Jerry LaCroix.

**Craig Krampf** on Alabama's new one. He also played on albums by Jimmy Jamison, Billy & the Suns, and David Wilcox.

**Tony Morales** has been working live with Rickie Lee Jones. He can also be heard

on a new Rippingtons album due out soon.

**Kenny Aronoff** recently recorded with Bob Dylan and toured with Marshall Crenshaw. He can also be heard on Iggy Pop's newest, an album by Darling Cruel, and on three tracks for Tommy Conwell & the Young Rumblers. He also played at Farm Aid, where he backed John Mellencamp, Lou Reed, Bonnie Raitt, Was (Not Was), Joe Ely, Iggy Pop, John Hiatt,

and Bruce Springsteen.

**Dwain Miller** recently left Keel and joined Atco recording artists Outlaw Blood, currently in the studio.

**Michael Blair** recently recording in London with Peter Dinklage and touring Europe with Gavin Friday.

**Denny Fongheiser** on records by the Williams Brothers, a new Enigma record by David Cassidy, Johnny Van Zandt, Anzac Day, and Mari Hamada.

continued on page 88







# The Tape Music Sticks To Better.

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## ASK A PRO



### Ian Wallace

**Q** I've admired your playing with various artists over the years. Could you tell me what electronics you used on the Don Henley tour? Also, did you use electronics on the new Quireboys album?

Paddy Bradley  
Milnrow, Rochdale, England

**A** First, I'd like to thank you for your support. I love to "talk drums," so I'm most happy to answer your questions.

The electronics I use with Don Henley are as follows: I have Reek Havoc's Drastik Plastik triggers mounted inside the shells of my Yamaha acoustic drumkit—specifically the kick and all four toms; I have a Simmons Hot Spot trigger mounted on the head of my snare drum. These trigger sampled sounds via the Aphex Impulse MIDI trigger device, and the sounds themselves are loaded in an Akai S1000HD 16-bit sampler. For all the percussion and keyboard sequences I use an Akai MPC60 Sequencer/Drum Machine. All the MIDI machines are kept in order with an MX8 MIDI Merge Box. For a click, I use the hi-hat and/or cabasa sounds on the MPC60, which are played back to me through the monitors via a separate volume control that is close at hand so I can reach it in case I have to adjust the volume. The whole mess is started and stopped by a footswitch near my hi-hat pedal, and I get my tempos from a little Boss metronome. I also use the Zildjian ZMC-1 cymbal miking system.

All these devices are routed through a Hill 16-channel rack-mount mixer so that I can control my own on-stage monitor volume. I have



separate outs in the mixer that go, via direct boxes, to the house mixer so our sound engineer can mix the sounds in the house.

To answer your second question, I did not use any electronics on the London Quireboys album, just pure acoustic drums.

### Carlos Vega



Photo by Lisa Wales

**Q** I enjoy watching and listening to you play the drums very much. The recording of you on the GRP Live In Session CD and video is something everyone should hear. Your drums sound unbelievable. Please tell me about your setup on that recording and include what sizes and kinds of drums, snare drum, heads, and cymbals you play. Also, please explain any tuning techniques you might use. I'd also like to know what recent recordings I can hear you on.

Yianni Thomakos  
Baltimore MD

**A** The drums I used on the GRP Live In Session album were

Gretsch. The toms were 10", 12", 13", and 14", the kick was 22x16, and the snare drum was a Ludwig bronze 5 1/2 x14. On the batter side of the toms I used Remo Emperor clears; the bottoms were fitted with clear Diplomats. The cymbals were Paiste: a 22" 602 ride, 602 thin crashes, and 2002 hi-hats.

When tuning, I start with both heads the same pitch. Then I fine-tune the top up or down, depending on the sound I want. Finally, Lee Ritenour's Color Rit and Linda Ronstadt's Cry Like A Rainstorm are two of the more recent recordings I've worked on.

### Joey Kramer

**Q** First, let me congratulate you on the success of your recent Aerosmith album. The first track on that album, "Young Lust," has a very unique snare sound. Could you tell me what kind of snare you used, the type of heads, and how the drum was miked?

Ken Cenerelli  
Kitchener, Ontario, Canada

**A** The unique snare sound was produced on a Tanta drum, fitted with a Remo Ambassador batter. It was miked with a Shure SM57 about 3" off the top head and another SM57 about 4" off the bottom.





# DAVE WECKL/YAMAHA SNARE DRUMS



Yamaha Snare Drums. Infinite variety of strong new voices. Every kind of sound: the razor cut of metal, solid warmth of wood, explosive snap of brass.

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Dave Weckl and Yamaha snare drums. The ideal partnership of consistency and controlled force.



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## IT'S QUESTIONABLE



**Q** I recently bought a used five-piece set of Ludwig *Standard* drums. In terms of outward appearance, these drums are almost identical to the Ludwig *Classics* of the same era. As I understand it, the *Standard* line was sold as an entry-level drumkit, so I'm guessing that the major difference between them and the *Classics* would be the kind of wood used in the shells.

What kind of shells were used on these drums, and how long were they in production? How would they compare in construction and sound quality to some of today's entry-level kits? I'd like to learn as much as possible about my latest purchase, so any help you can provide will be appreciated.

Tom Lucas  
Kokomo IN

**A** For historical data on Ludwig products, there is no better source than Mr. William F. Ludwig, Jr., who provided us with the following response to your question: "The Ludwig *Standard* line was designed to produce sales at the entry level. It was created by Ludwig engineers at my request in 1965 as the "Beatle Boom" ended. Foreign competition—particularly from Japan—was beginning to make itself felt, and the *Standard* line represented an all-out effort to stem the tide and remain competitive.

"The shells were constructed of four-ply cross-grain mahogany and maple panels in place of the usual six-ply lay-up. A new streamlined lug was designed without sharp corners or edges and minus the usual Ludwig design lines in order to facilitate polishing on automatic polishing lathes. Similarly, plating was also made easier. This was the first all-new tension casing design Ludwig ever engineered with both visual attraction and production savings in mind. With the slightly lighter (but very strong and resonant) shells and lighter-weight lugs and hardware, we were able to compete successfully with our foreign competitors.

"When the line was designed, we resurrected the 'Standard' name from the Ludwig & Ludwig catalogs of the 1920s, wherein the slogan 'The Standard of the World—Ludwig' appears over and over again. We continued production of the Ludwig *Standard* line for eight years—until 1974 or thereabouts."

**Q** I have a student with a pair of hi-hat cymbals marked: "K. Zildjian & Co., Istanbul, Zildjian" and also stamped "Made In Turkey." They measure about 14" in diameter, with one cymbal slightly larger than the other. They are very old and were purchased used in the Chicago area. There is a signature inside each bell that I can't read. Any information you could give me concerning these cymbals would be appreciated.

Gilbert Baker  
Percussion Instructor  
University of Central Arkansas  
Conway AR

**A** According to Zildjian's Lennie DiMuzio, "We would like to advise you that due to the fact that cymbals do not have a serial number or a coding on them, it is very difficult to actually pinpoint the time and year that they were manufactured. However, our experience and knowledge tells us that the trademark used on your hi-hat cymbals represents that type of cymbal that was made at least 60-70 years ago. Also, all the cymbals manufactured in those days were signed by the Zildjian family on the inside of the bell, which was done to state the fact that the cymbal was an authentic Zildjian cymbal. Your student's cymbals were definitely made in Istanbul, are quite old and valuable, and should be kept in the best condition possible."

**Q** What is the difference between a Remo coated *Ambassador* and a Gretsch coated *Permatone Ambassador*? Is it the thickness of the coating?

Russell Scarborough  
Norfolk VA

**A** According to a spokesman for Remo, the only difference between the two heads is the logo. Remo supplies original-equipment drumheads for installation on the drumkits of most major drum manufacturers, including Gretsch.

**Q** I recently bought a PureCussion *NE Series* set of drums, and found them absolutely amazing—particularly in terms of their sound. I am truly satisfied. The only real problem is that the bass drum pedal, when attached to the hoop, twists upon heavy playing. I put this down to the fact that the hoop is not of wood but of

plastic (I think) and hence the pedal does not "bite." What can be done to solve this problem?

Oliver Beazer  
Plymouth, England

**A** We forwarded your question to Walt Johnston, vice president of PureCussion, who provided this reply: "First of all, thanks for the compliments on the sound of our *NE Series* drums. The new counterhoops for this series are made of die-cast aluminum. The casting is done in a family mold, producing all five sizes that we offer. As in any die-cast process, a radius is put on each half to allow the metal to separate from the mold. This, unfortunately, leaves a slightly tapered foot-pedal lip that does not offer much for a pedal to "bite" on. A simple solution would be to stick on a small strip of our Muff'it material, or any adhesive-backed thin rubber strip. Also, a small section of leather could be adhered to the lip, which would allow your pedal to tighten down onto something with "give." The friction between that material and the casting should then eliminate your problem."

**Q** In the February '90 review of Evans' *Genera EQ System* drum-heads, it was mentioned that the studio model featured small slits in the Evans logo on the front head. Is it possible for me to make slits in my bass drum heads to give my bass drum a better sound? If so, how would I go about doing it?

Zac Schwarzbach  
Kingston RI

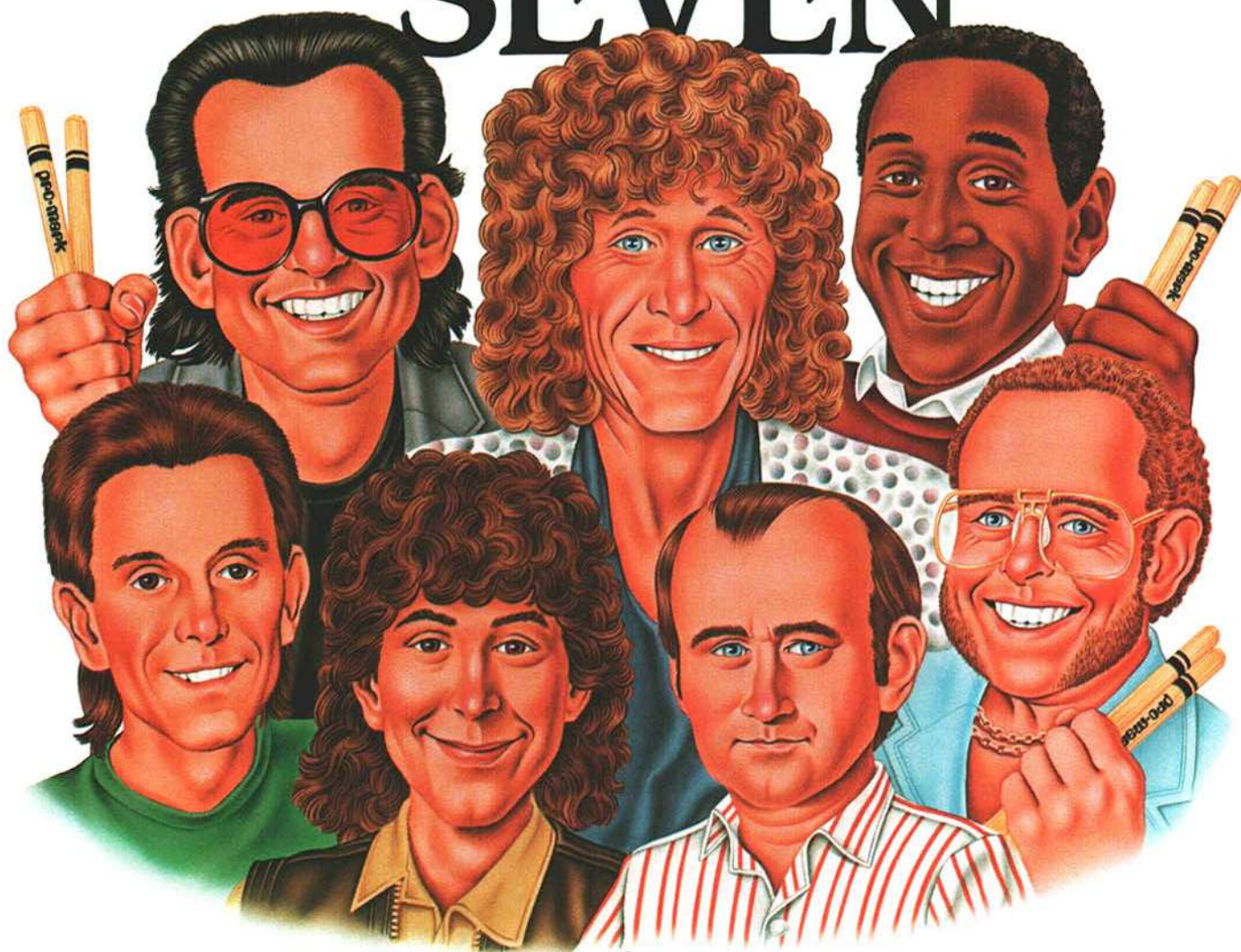
**A** The Evans *Genera EQ System* is just that: a system based on combinations of drumheads with very special features. The batter head incorporates an internal sound control ring and specially placed holes around the perimeter. The system is intended to eliminate the need for any dampening inside the bass drum, and so offers two front heads for use with or without miking. The head that you refer to has slits cut into the logo primarily to allow a bit of air to escape and to focus the sound of the bass drum at a point where a microphone can be placed.

It is important to understand this background information, because it illustrates that the slits in the front head are

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# THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN



*Liberty DeVitto*

LIBERTY DEVITTO

*Tommy Aldridge*

TOMMY ALDRIDGE

*Billy Cobham*

BILLY COBHAM

*Carl Palmer*

CARL PALMER

*Simon Phillips*

SIMON PHILLIPS

*Phil Collins*

PHIL COLLINS

*Ed Shaughnessy*

ED SHAUGHNESSY

They're the Magnificent Seven. These world-famous jazz and rock drummers could choose anyone to make their drumsticks. They chose Pro-Mark. Their signatures say it all!

Pro-Mark's Autograph Series drumsticks are sold in the best music stores worldwide... and with no price increase! If unavailable at your favorite music store, call the Pro-Mark Drummer's Hotline free at 1-800-233-5250.

The Magnificent Seven...  
Our reputation is in their hands. And yours!

*Autograph Series*

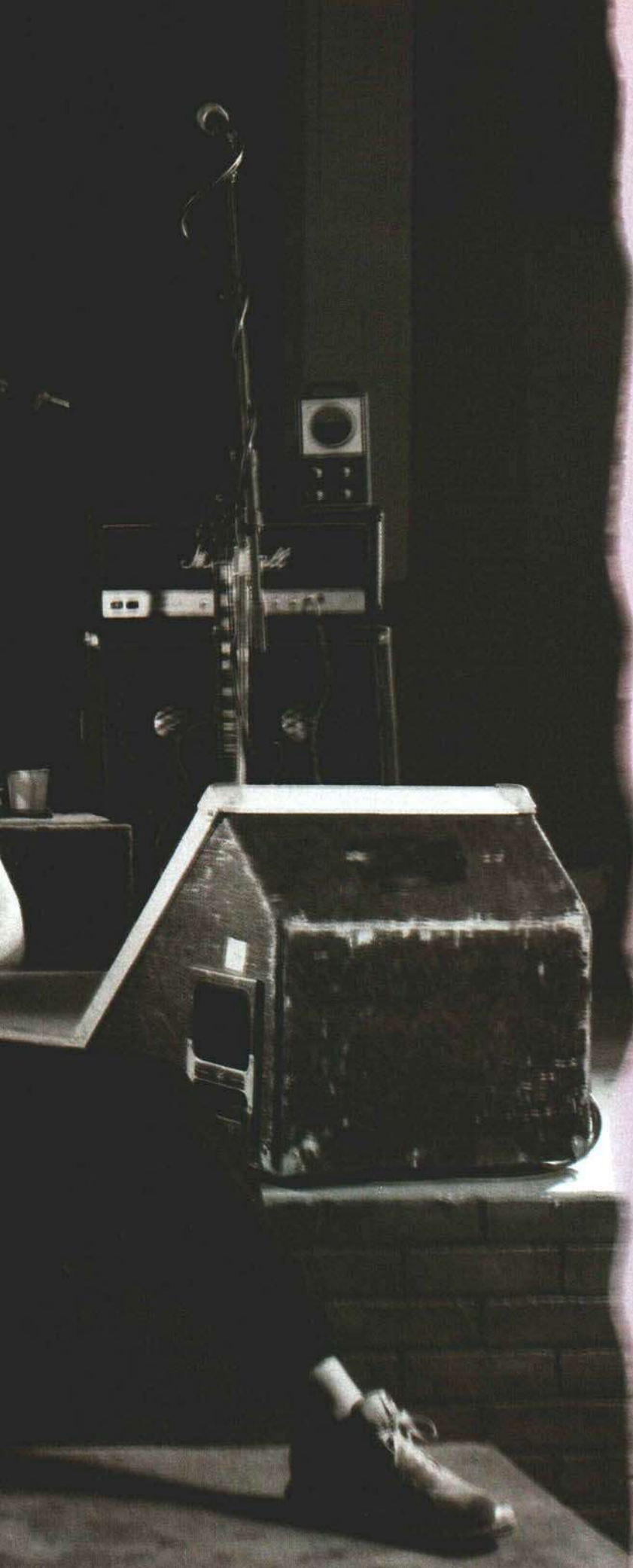
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NEW GENERATION

**The World's Class Drumsticks**









"Man, what a night. I think it's the best we've ever played. The show was great, the sound was great, and everybody was talking about the new kit. I mean everybody. Even Matt, and nothing impresses Matt. I knew they sounded great when I bought 'em, but I never expected this. Ya' know, that slogan is starting to make a lot of sense. The best reason to play drums huh... I guess that's what I'm feeling right now, and feeling like this makes it all worth it."

***Pearl***<sup>®</sup>

The best reason to play drums.







# Dave

Dave Weckl's image appears on the TV screen, playing a drum solo during a live show by the Chick Corea Elektric Band. As Weckl moves from a coloristic cymbal introduction into a time feel, a drummer stands watching the performance. He appears to be enjoying what he is seeing, but he also seems to be studying Weckl intently, noting every nuance of the solo and mentally taking notes. The person standing in front of the TV is Dave Weckl himself, and the performance was taped at the previous night's show.

"This is one of the greatest practice tools I've ever found," Dave says, gesturing towards a video camera. "It's especially good on the road. I've been videotaping myself every night and then playing it back at the hotel. You can really learn a lot by watching yourself."

The fact that Weckl would come up with a way to improve his playing while on the road says a lot about who he is and why he has accomplished so much at a relatively young age. Given his mastery of the drumset and the fact that he is playing some very intense music every night, no one would blame him if he spent his off-time sightseeing in the different cities the band is appearing in, or if he simply caught some extra sleep to be fresh for the shows. But he sits in hotel rooms studying videotapes of himself, analyzing his performances, always looking for ways to better himself.

Judging by his

output over the past few years, his dedication has paid off. Besides several albums with the Chick Corea Elektric Band and one with the Akoustic Band, he has appeared on albums by Steve Khan & Eyewitness, Chuck Loeb and Andy LaVerne, the S.O.S. All-Stars, and two albums and a video by Corea bandmate John Patitucci. On his own he has released a cassette/book package of play-along material called *Contemporary Drummer + One*, as well as two videos, all on DCI. He also participated in two concerts to benefit the Buddy Rich Memorial Scholarship, in which he performed with the Buddy Rich Big Band. (The second concert, held in LA., is also available on video.) And September '90 will see the release of his first solo album on GRP, *Masterplan*.

But it is his association with Chick Corea that has provided him the most exposure and given him the perfect setting in which to utilize his skills. Weckl began his stint with Corea several years ago with the formation of the Elektric Band. In 1989, the core of that group—Corea, Weckl, and Patitucci—recorded and performed live as the Chick Corea Akoustic Band. Where the Elektric Band featured tight groove playing and incorporated state-of-the-art electronic technology, the Akoustic Band was a straight-ahead acoustic jazz trio that was hailed for its looser feeling and the high degree of interplay among its members.

This year has seen Corea, Weckl, and Patitucci re-unite with guitarist Frank Gambale and saxophonist Eric Marienthal in the Elektric Band. They have released a new album, *Inside Out*, and have gone on the road performing music that encompasses everything from '70s Return To Forever material to selections

from the latest album.

It's clear that the Elektric Band has benefited from the year that the rhythm section spent working as the Akoustic Band, and also from the fact that Corea has gotten to know the musicians he is writing for so well. "That's true," Weckl agrees. "Chick wanted to incorporate a lot of the looseness and spontaneity of the Akoustic Band into the Elektric Band with this album. When we first started rehearsing the music, we were going, 'Wow, what is this? A lot of it is a little bit left to try to put out to a mass audience.' The big tune especially, 'Tale Of Daring,' was a real challenge to record. The fact that we actually got it on tape was pretty amazing to us."

"We actually came real close to not releasing that album and recording something a bit more commercial," Dave continues. "But as a group we decided that we just had to put it out, whether it got airplay or not. It's selling better than any of the albums, so far. I don't know how much airplay it's getting; there's not really a great deal of importance on that anyway from any of us, because you're either going to do what you do honestly and put it on a record, or you're going to try to succumb to a style of music that gets on the radio more, which is not honest. I mean, if we're going to play instrumental music, and we are who we are, we're going to be playing some complex, slamming music. So yeah, Chick did write it with everybody in

# Weckl

BY RICK MATTINGLY

the band, and how they play, in mind."

As successful as *Inside Out* has been, Weckl says that the band has no intention of turning its back on the more groove-style tunes found on the Elektric Band's first three albums in favor of the more complex type of material on this album. "At a live performance," Dave explains, "certain tunes really get the crowd going. And it tends to be the groove tunes—the things that they can rock their heads back and forth to. Most of those are the ones that John and I have co-written, like 'Sidewalk' and 'Light Years.' With a couple of those types of tunes in there, you can get away with something a little more complex like a 'Tale Of Daring' showoff tune or a straight-ahead thing like 'Got A Match?' So for the next album, we're going to do a co-everything,

with John and I especially, because Chick likes the way that we write and produce.

"It's not going to be another *Light Years* album," Dave adds. "There'll be more head-bobbing stuff, but it's not going to be in any way, shape, or form an effort to be commercial or an attempt to get radio play, which *Light Years* totally was. When Chick asked me to be associate producer of that album, he wanted it to be as close as possible to a pop thing and to get radio play. I didn't have much to do with the writing, other than the tune 'Light Years.' Chick wrote most of the stuff, and as far as I was concerned, he went so far the other way on a lot of the tunes that it just wasn't him. But he realizes that."

One shouldn't get the impression that Weckl is ashamed of that album, though. "I really like *Light Years*," he says. "To me, it's one of the better-sounding albums we've done just in the way it's

presented. And some of the grooves are definitely slamming. But the next album is not going to be like that as far as commerciality. It's going to be groove-oriented, but there's going to be blowing, and we'll try to get that live element thing happening. Chick wants it to be a total band effort, and it's nice that he thinks that much of what John and I do, and Eric and Frank, too."

It would seem that the longer this group stays together, the more it becomes a real band, as opposed to just being Chick Corea and a group of talented sidemen. "Yeah," Dave nods in assent, "that's why we are doing it, even though it's very hard to keep this type of band on the road and make it work financially. We're not making a ton of money out on the road; it's comfortable, but theoretically any one of us could stay home and work in the studios and make more if that was the primary concern. But it's not.

"This is our vehicle," Dave explains. "Chick has created such a great working environment through his management and all the organization. I mean, if it was a pain in the neck and it wasn't happening, none of us would be here. Being on the road is not total fun all the time. And we have to be working every night, pretty much. We've only had two or three days off in four weeks. You play the same show basically every night, because you put together a show that you think will be a killer, and sometimes you do two shows a night. It can get pretty wearing.

"That's why bands don't stay together. Financially, it's not worth it to a lot of people because they can make more doing other things, or musically it's not gratifying. There are a lot of reasons. Personalities don't match up; I mean, I see these people more than I see my wife. So we work hard at getting along personally, and we work hard at keeping the music fresh. Believe me, it's not easy to get inspired to play the same show every night, especially if maybe the crowd is really far away from you so you don't get that response, or for some reason they're really not that into it, or if equipment is going haywire on stage. If all these factors start mounting, it can get pretty crazy.

"But we all work at it. If Chick sees somebody going through something, it will get talked about and handled. There's never a communication gap in this band. Nobody in this organization does drugs at all or drinks to excessive amounts. We're probably the straightest band I've ever seen. We're all married, we're all concerned with keeping happening relationships going with our



Photo by Lissa Wales





families, and it's all about playing music. If the co-writing thing happens a little more, it will be more of a representation, too, of what we like to do as individuals, and not just as sidemen playing Chick's music. But there's nothing wrong with that either, you know what I mean? It's a total challenge.

"So it would be a hard gig to leave. That's what we've been talking about for the last four or five years: maintaining it. And we do what we have to do in order to do that. Granted, the audience is small in comparison to any type of pop act, but we definitely have our fans who love it, and we are getting new fans all the time.

"And that's the whole point. We have fun playing. We had a great effect tonight on the audience; they were really into it at both shows. That's what I go for; that's what makes me put out everything I've got, to feel it coming back. If I can see

somebody out there that's digging it, it makes a lot of difference.

"I don't think any of us want that to end. It's a special thing. But at the same time, it's a matter of survival, too. It's getting increasingly harder for us to go out and hit it as hard as we do. Our bus driver has driven for more rock 'n' roll tours than you can imagine. And he says this is the most gruelling tour he's ever been on. I believe it. But in order to make it work, you have to go out and do it. At this point, it's worth it to all of us. We're all trying to make other things happen so we don't have to go out on the road so much, but keep it together, keep it happening continually.

"And it's fun for me," Dave adds. "As a drummer, it's one of the greatest gigs to have. To really have no barriers, to be able to play and be as creative as you want to be—and actually, you can't do anything

but that. The minute you take it easy and just play the notes, it's definitely known. You have to be going for it all the time."

Dave Weckl has been going for it for quite a while. Back before anyone had ever heard of him, one of his teachers, Gary Chester, used to tell a lot of his other students about Dave. "That kid has the right attitude," Gary would say. "Whenever he sits down at the drums, his intention is to learn something new. He doesn't just sit there playing stuff he can already do and call that practicing."

Weckl smiles when told of Gary's assessment of him. "Ever since the first *MD* article when I said I used to practice 15 hours a day at times," Weckl says, "I've had people come up to me and say, 'Wow, did you really practice that much?' And yeah, during those summers when I was in college I was able to practice that much. But as you get older and responsibilities start to settle in, there is a heck of a lot less time to practice. For me now, when I've got time to practice, I go downstairs with the intent of working on something that I'm not comfortable with or that I can't do. It would be stupid for me to go down there and just play what I already know. I do that on the road six months out of the year.

"I get into that at clinics. With kids and the guys who are in college, the time to practice is *nova*. Obviously it takes many hours of playing over and over again what you can already do to perfect it and to be able to do it comfortably. But you have to spend the better part of your practicing time trying to learn things you can't do.

"And when I was studying with Gary, I mean, there was just no choice. Everything he gave me I couldn't do," Dave laughs. "So I put in serious, serious practice time just on his stuff. I think the reason he made that comment was because I would come in and nail his lesson. I couldn't stand to not have it happening. A lot of kids would be on the same thing week after week after week. My intention was to learn as much as I could.

"But it became an obsession after a while," Dave says, "and it was the only thing I was practicing. While it was helping me immensely in the area of independence, concentration, and those types of things, in order for me to balance it out I had to actually stop and then apply everything in more musical situations. Because his stuff wasn't just something where you could take lesson 35 and do it



on the gig that night. His whole thing, to me, was about the application of his concept to the drumset.

"I think people waste a lot of time practicing," Dave reiterates.

"I know I used to waste it sometimes and just do what I could already do. You get plenty of chances to do that on the gig. Unless you're not gigging—then you need to practice everything," he adds. "If you're gigging, though, you don't have that much time, so it's important to spend the time practicing what you can't do."

To see what Dave Weckl *can* do, one need look no further than his solo album, *Masterplan*. "I wasn't going for an 'I can play this style and I can play that style' type of thing," Dave says. "It's just realistic writing and playing of what I like to do, which happens to be a lot of different styles. There's a straight-ahead blasting acoustic-trio piece on this record, as well as some sequenced stuff. So it's a lot of different things. It's pretty much a statement of everything I like to play."

The album is filled with references to Dave's past, including musicians he grew up with in St. Louis and styles of music that he played in his formative years. There are also some very contemporary influences. "The whole reason for 'Tower Of Inspiration' was nine-year-old Jacob Armen," Dave says. "Jay Oliver and I were in the midst of writing for the album, and I saw this little guy play on the *Tonight Show*, and I freaked out. It was the most inspirational thing I've seen in a while. So I immediately ran into the drum room with this inspired desire to write this killing groove-with-horns piece. And we came up with this tune in about two hours. It's sort of Tower Of Power inspired as well; it's got that type of groove, so thus the title."

Groove is the key element of another track, called "Here & There." "That's one of my favorite feels to play," Dave comments. "It's sort of like a Jeff Porcaro-type shuffle/funk groove, for lack of any other definition. We called it 'Here & There' because it jumps from here to there metrically, without it being blatantly mathematical. The triplets in the time frame become 16th notes, and the quarter note changes, and it goes back and forth that way. At the end of the tune another modulation takes effect where the quarter-note triplets become dotted quarters, and it goes into 3/4 for the out part of the tune."

"A lot of my favorite music," Dave says,

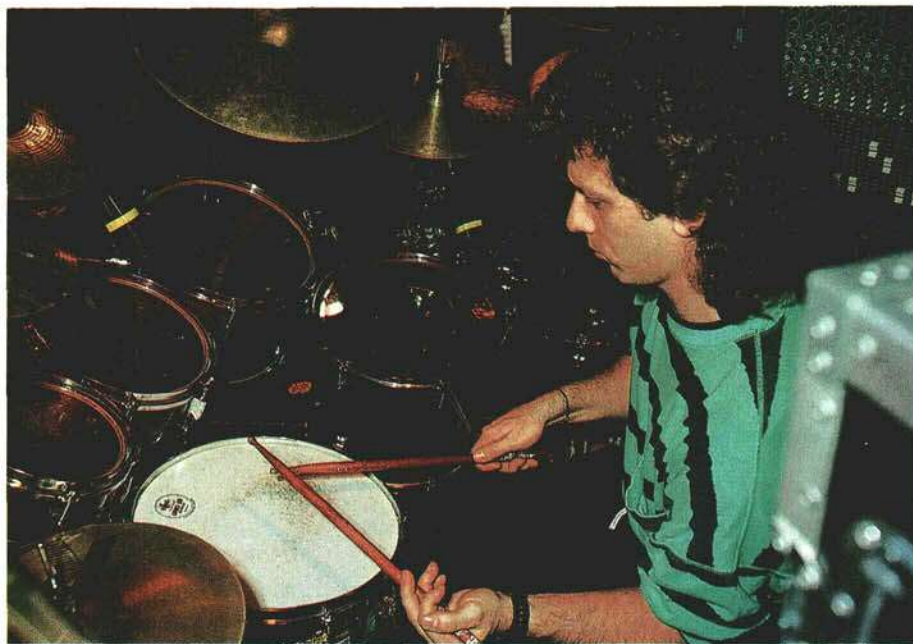


Photo by Lissa Wales

"is slamming funk or groove playing—even a lot of pop music. After I went through my Buddy Rich phase and my play-as-many-notes-as-fast-as-you-can-play-them phase, I started to realize that if you can't play time and play it solidly, you're not going to work. I went through a period of basically not playing anything when I was in the band Nite Sprite. That taught me a lot about playing groove. Although this tune is groove-oriented, it still has the parts with the musical spark and the drum thing that makes it special."

"On this tune in particular there's a tinge of pop production as far as snare sound and such," Dave adds. "Another goal of mine besides having great playing was to get it across with real conviction. A lot is lost sometimes in the way that music is recorded and produced, which is often the biggest difference in a live performance versus a recorded one. I'm not talking about overproduction, because I don't like that either. I like to make it realistic-sounding, but as good-sounding as I possibly can with reverb units and such. It's not a matter of falsifying things, but just making it sound as gutsy as possible. A lot of emotion gets lost, for instance, when you go into a section of a tune that's like blasting rock 'n' roll, but the snare drum is as dry as a bone. It should be *huge*, it should be saying 'WHACK' with all this sound, and it's just going 'thud.' That doesn't make it."

"So for me, half the fun of making a record is getting the parts across production-wise. As I'm playing, I know how I want it to sound in the mix, so a lot of the way I play is influenced by how I

know I'm going to mix it later. I may leave tons of space and play real simple because I know the effect I'm going to go for is to have this real BIG sound happening."

"A lot of it depends on the style of music," Dave continues. "When you're recording a straight-ahead acoustic jazz album, none of that comes into play. You put it down as naturally as you possibly can. But when you're dealing with music that goes in and out of a lot of different styles, it's an important thing that's overlooked a lot. That's why I do so much triggering live with the Elektric Band, and I do a lot of triggering in the studio, too, except that it's easier to control it afterwards. You have to worry about it not double triggering, and the performance can be affected, especially in the studio. Live you don't care; if it double triggers, it's gone a second later. It's not going down on wax."

"So this tune has a little bit of that pop production where at the beginning the snare drum is huge, and there is a bit of a quarter-note triplet delay on the whole kit. You can't really hear it, but if it weren't there you would know it. There wouldn't be this motion happening. It's gone by the time the rest of the band comes in. But it's an effect that creates this emotion. It's an important thing to me."

And to get a huge sound, did Weckl use a bigger snare drum than his usual Yamaha piccolo snare? "To be honest with you," Dave says, looking almost embarrassed, "I have to tell you what I used on most of this album. On a couple of the tunes I did use the Yamaha piccolo. However," he says, starting to smile, "this

# Weckl's Setup

**Drumset:** Yamaha *Recording Custom* in cherry wood finish.

**A.** Piccolo or 5 1/2 x 14 chrome snare

**B.** 16 x 16 floor tom

**C.** 8 x 8 tom

**D.** 8 x 10 tom

**E.** 8 x 12 tom

**F.** 11 x 13 tom

**G.** 13 x 15 tom

**H.** 16 x 22 bass drum (sometimes a 16 x 18 or 16 x 20 for acoustic music)

**Cymbals:** Zildjian

**1.** 13" K/Z hi-hats

**2.** 17" K China

**3.** 17" K *Dark* crash brilliant

**4.** 12" K *Dark* splash brilliant

**5.** 20" K Custom ride

**6.** 14" K/Z hi-hats

**7.** 14" A swish on top of an 18" K *Dark* crash brilliant

**8.** 18" K *Dark* crash brilliant

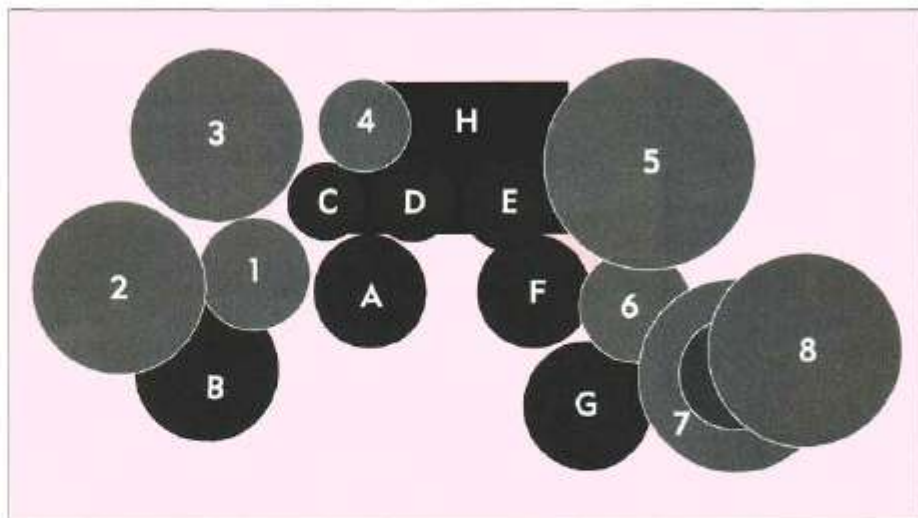
**Hardware:** All Yamaha including either a 7 or 8 series hi-hat stand, and a chain drive double pedal with felt beaters.

**Heads:** Currently experimenting with a variety of heads.

**Sticks:** Vic Firth Dave Weckl model.

**Electronics:** Simmons SDSV, two Akai S-900 samplers, Roland Octapad, LP Spike, and various reverb units, compressors, and noise gates.

Weckl's basic setup hasn't changed much in the past few years, except that he recently added a third rack tom and



changed the sizes of some of his toms. "There was no specific reason that I added another tom-tom," Dave explains, "other than that I wanted to add some color to the drums, and there were a lot of things I would do where I would find myself having to go to the floor tom for the third tonality. So I just threw another tom up there at one point, and liked the way it felt. It actually made me play a few things differently, coming up with new ideas. I was going through a period where I felt I needed to get some inspiration from the kit, just to do some different things, and that helped. That was part of the reason for getting the double pedal setup, too. I've had that on the kit for a couple of years now, and I've probably gotten to practice it about two weeks. But I just put it up there to have it there, and take some

chances and go for things with it. So it's getting better.

"All last year with the Akoustic Band I was using normal-sized toms, 8" deep, and I found that I liked them. Because of the 8", 10", and 12" toms being power sizes, the floor toms had to be tuned too low. The regular-sized drums had as deep a tone, but punchier. I was able to tune the drums a little easier, and they stayed out of the way of each other, resonance-wise.

"I go back and forth, too. The 13" and 15" floor toms are still power sizes, but on the left of the hi-hat I go back and forth between a 12" power tom and a 16" floor tom. I like them both. The 16" is nice; sometimes, however, it doesn't handle triggered sounds very well because of its mass. So sometimes I'll use the 12" instead."

fluke of a drum happened to show up.

"It came out of my neighbors' attic—sweet people named Alan and Josephine who live next door to me in New York. They're always looking out for my wife when I'm gone, and they used to cut my grass for me and stuff. Their son, Albert, had played drums 15 or 20 years ago. Anyway, I was leaving to do the album, and Alan says, 'You know, we've got these drums up in our attic. Maybe you should check them out to see if there's anything you want, because we're going to get rid of them.' So I went over and looked at them, and there was an early '60s Ludwig *Supra 400* up there that they told me to take, and there was this old set of Kent drums. The worst color you can imagine—it looked like a zebra, black and white stripes and the whole deal. The snare drum had a hole in the head, a phillips-head screw for the

snare strainer, six lugs, and maybe about eight wires going underneath. The thing weighed about two ounces; it looked like it was put together with veneer board. But I took it to St. Louis along with the Ludwig.

"So I was at Jay's studio, where we did most of the record, and I had about ten snare drums: the Kent and the Ludwig my neighbors had given me, another Ludwig, a couple of Yamaha drums, a custom-made brass-shell snare drum made by a guy up in Seattle, Mark Vellan, who makes nice drums. I went through every drum, and I couldn't use anything but the Kent. For some reason, that drum just had its own place in the mix. It sounded terrible alone, but it had this quality about it that allowed it to cut through. I kept putting different drums up and hitting them, and I kept going back to this silly snare drum," Dave says,

shaking his head and laughing. "So I used it on just about everything except 'Auratune' and 'Garden Wall,' which I used the Yamaha piccolo on. But everything else was this Kent. Unbelievable."

A definite highlight of the album is "Festival de Ritmo," which features a big band sound and evokes memories of Dave's playing at the Buddy Rich tribute concerts. "That style of music is what was happening in the Midwest at the time I was growing up in St. Louis," Dave says. "I was into a lot of different styles of music, but the big band element was really important. It taught me how to read, and listening to Buddy, Louie, and all these other big band drummers taught me how to set up figures. Even though

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# Winard Harper

*Saturday night at Condon's, a hip new hang in Manhattan. The Harper Brothers have been holding forth all week, swinging and burning on sets of hard bop and ballads, but this night the magic is really happening. Winard Harper is working hard behind the traps, driving the band, grinning, sweating, exchanging knowing glances with trumpet-playing brother Philip as they steamroll their way through Lee Morgan's revved-up "Mogie."*

*The crowd responds with shouts. The room is lit up with excitement. And the band bears down. You close your eyes for a moment and it's 1961, you're at the Cafe Bohemia in Greenwich Village, and Art Blakey & the Jazz Messengers are taking care of business. Or it's 1966 and you're at Slugs, digging on Lee Morgan and Billy Higgins running it down. Or maybe images of Cannonball Adderley and his brother Nat dance in your head with that insistent pulse of Louis Hayes providing the push.*

*You open your eyes, and it's 1990. You realize that Winard was in diapers when those hard bop heroes*

*were cutting their classic sides. And brother Philip wasn't even born yet. But the two Harper Brothers took to this music as if it were the only music that mattered. For some reason, rock, rap, funk, and fusion just never reached them like hard bop did. They focused on it at an early age, and now they play like seasoned veterans, adding their own fresh take on the genre as they continue to coalesce and grow.*

*Critics have also responded enthusiastically to the Harper Brothers' combination of solid swing, soulful expression, and in-the-pocket ensemble snugness. down beat awarded four and a half stars to their recently released second album on Verve, Remembrance, recorded live at the Village Vanguard last September before a packed house of hard bop fans. Audio Review gave the album its highest rating—10 for the performance, 10 for the sound quality. And as other accolades poured in, the jazz-buying public responded by pushing Remembrance into the coveted #1 spot on the Billboard jazz chart. Clearly, with this sophomore outing, the Harper Brothers have arrived. And a big part of the band's success comes from the mature, musical approach that Winard takes behind the kit. His combination of power and finesse is augmented by a great pair of ears, an uncanny empathy for the other musicians, and a wise sense of dynamics. That is, he knows how to create excitement. He knows how to make the soloists sound even better by kicking off their statements with a "well-placed accent. And he knows that people enjoy watching musicians have fun on stage. A reserved young man in public, Winard comes alive behind the kit. His love of the music is genuine, and the crowd picks up on it, spurring him on with shouts of encouragement. In short, the kid's got star quality.*

*I spoke to Winard at the Manhattan offices of Polygram/Verve on the very day that Remembrance shot to #1 in Billboard. Afterward, the excited publicity staff gathered around the young drummer to toast his success with raised glasses of champagne. The way Winard and Philip are tearing it up these days, that's bound to be the first of many toasts to come.*

**BY BILL MILKOWSKI**

# Answering The Hard Bop Call



Photo by Lona Foote





Photo by Lona Foote

**BM:** Let's start from the beginning. You were born in Baltimore in 1962. When did you first become interested in playing drums?

**WH:** Back when I was four years old I used to listen to records my older brother Danny had. Early on it was mostly Motown hits and pop stuff, and I'd try to pick off parts from the records, beating along with pencils on those little Kiwi shoe polish cans. I'd set them up on the floor and have a whole set to play on. My father saw this, so when I was about five, he bought me a snare drum. I began sitting in with Danny's band on a couple of tunes around then, and by the time I was nine, I had my first drumset and became the regular drummer in Danny's band, playing mostly rock 'n' roll and Motown tunes.

**BM:** When did the jazz influence come into play?

**WH:** When I was about 11 years old, we moved to Atlanta. That's when my brother started getting into jazz, and he started playing jazz records for me, trying to get me interested. It took some time for it to catch on with me. But he played me the Clifford Brown and Max Roach album *Study In Brown*, the one with "Jordu" on it. I was sold after that. Hearing Max play with the mallets and hearing them imitate traffic sounds on "Parisian Thoroughfare" really fascinated me. I knew then it was something that I wanted to do. I had grown up listening to people like Jimi Hendrix, Sly & the Family Stone, Graham Central Station, Kool & the Gang...but to come up with that and

then hear Max play with brushes and mallets—whew! You just didn't hear that kind of drumming on those Temptations or Sly records. I mean, this was something totally new to me. Man, I was impressed.

**BM:** So that single record brought about a distinct break from rock and pop music for you?

**WH:** That's when it started. But the problem was, Atlanta was not a jazz town. Even now I don't think they have one bona fide jazz club down there. So that was really a problem for me growing up. The only time you could catch some cats from New York was at the summer jazz festival. There are some good local musicians down there. I had the opportunity to meet some, like Steve Ellington, a drummer who used to live in New York and play with Freddie Hubbard. He would show me some things now and then. But I wasn't playing jazz in Atlanta. My playing experience down there was mainly Top-40 and gospel.

**BM:** What other drummers besides Max Roach did you become interested in then?

**WH:** I was hearing a lot of Billy Higgins because both of my brothers played trumpet, and they were both into Lee Morgan. And Billy played on a lot of those Lee Morgan sessions for Blue Note. [Check out *The Rajah*, BST 84426, *The Gigolo*, BST 84212, *Cornbread*, BST 84222, or *The Sidewinder*, BST 84157]. So I was hearing Billy Higgins all day long, to the point where that sound stuck in my mind. I've read things about our

records where people say I sound like Art Blakey. But to me, if I'm close to sounding like anybody, it's Billy Higgins. He's influenced me a lot.

**BM:** What was it about his style that first caught your ear?

**WH:** His feel. He just has an impeccable feel for the drums, a happy spirit that comes across. Even without seeing him I could feel his spirit coming through those records—the happiness of it. And of course, once you see him play...he's got such great charisma, always with that big smile when he's playing drums. Papa Jo Jones was like that—had that same charisma. In fact, I had a chance to see some videos that Billy Higgins had of Papa Jo in action when he was young. They're very similar in their overall approach to soloing. And when you watch them, it looks like they're having fun playing. That's the way I like to play, because it's fun for me.

**BM:** Did you have any formal music education when you were growing up in Atlanta?

**WH:** I went to a performing arts high school in Atlanta, but they didn't have a jazz program at the time. I was playing in the marching band, but I wanted to play jazz. I didn't know exactly how to do it, but I knew that I needed to leave Atlanta. First I went to Cincinnati. I had gotten a partial scholarship to the conservatory there, but I didn't like it and only stayed for a semester and a half. Cincinnati just wasn't a jazz town. But while in Cincinnati, I heard talk about a drummer named Billy Hart. Some guy at the conservatory was talking about how Billy was his favorite drummer and that I should check him out. But I really thought no more of it. I came back to Atlanta, and one day I was laying up in my bedroom listening to the radio, and they started talking about a jazz clinic that was going to be happening at Georgia State the next morning—with Frank Foster and Billy Hart. It was at 8:00 in the morning. Now, you don't usually see me at 8:00 in the morning, but I had heard so much about Billy Hart that I thought I'd get up early and go check him out. I took Philip along. He went to Frank Foster's trumpet clinic, and I went to Billy Hart's drum clinic. And for some strange reason, Billy and I hit it off right away. I could see a lot of myself in him, and probably it was vice versa. We approached a lot of things the same way. Anyway, we hung out that night and all the next day. I was driving him around town, and he was telling me about music, telling me that if I was really serious about wanting to play, there were certain things I needed to do. And one of them was to leave Atlanta.

I ended up moving to Washington D.C. to attend Howard University. I had relatives there, and I knew Billy was from there. My goal was to work with everybody there that Billy Hart had ever worked with. And I actually did get to work with John Malachi, Shirley Horn, Buck Hill, and Reuben Brown, all great musicians that I learned a lot from. I really got my foundation for playing this music in D.C.

**BM:** How did your playing change during your period in D.C.?

**WH:** It matured, because I was around the music so much more. Coming from Atlanta to D.C. was like going to New York, man. To me, the pace was a lot faster. And I could look in the paper and find some heavy musician in town somewhere every week. About my third week in town, Jamil Nasser came through to do a workshop, and I got hired to play for it. Jamil laid a bunch of information on me. And whenever Billy would come down, we'd hang out, go over to his mother's house, have dinner, and talk. He'd tell me about certain musical things and introduce me to other musicians in D.C. that I hadn't met. He introduced me to Rueben Brown, who hired me to play trio gigs every Monday at the One Step Down. And when I wasn't gigging, I would take my drums out on the corner in Georgetown, get a tenor player or an alto player, and make some money. Then I'd take whatever money I'd make, go across the street, and buy a bunch of records.

**BM:** Was there any specific thing that you worked on during that period in terms of technique or strengthening any weaknesses?

**WH:** At that time, I wanted to strengthen

everything about playing this music. I had listened to some of this music, but not as much as I needed to. Because Atlanta was a small town, you couldn't get that many great records. I did know some music from my older brother—Charlie Parker tunes, Lee Morgan tunes, and certain standards. But there was so much more I needed to learn. So my main thing when I got to D.C. was to put in as much listening time as I possibly could. I was buying five or six albums a day at one point. If I'd go out there on the street and make \$100 or \$150, I'd spend half of that on records. And the other thing was, this was the first time I had the opportunity to really *see* what was being done, as opposed to just sitting there in my bedroom listening to records and trying to figure out what's going on. It's probably easier for musicians who play a melodic instrument and can transcribe well. But I know for me, drums are a visual instrument. I've been fooled listening to records, thinking somebody was doing it one way and then finding out he was doing it a totally different way. That happened to me one time when I saw Vernell Fournier play Blues Alley with Ahmad Jamal. He was doing this one thing left-handed on the hi-hat, and I could've sworn from the record that he was doing it right-handed. So that was just one learning experience. There were many during that period. You really have to see someone play—especially a drummer like Philly Joe Jones. Man, he did so much slick stuff, and when you see him do it, it registers.

**BM:** Were there any other key mentor figures for you during this time?

**WH:** Well, Billy Hart told me about this little cat named Kenny Washington. So I

made a trip up to New York to hang out with him. Kenny was working the Village Vanguard with Johnny Griffin, and we hung out and talked afterward. I could see that Kenny had so much knowledge of the music and of the history. He knew all about the drummers that had come before him. I kept his number, and I would call him from D.C. with questions: "Where do I find such and such a drummer? What albums would you recommend?" And he'd tell me. He pointed me in the direction of some really important albums to check out, which helped me get a focus on what I was doing.

**BM:** You mentioned that Max Roach was instrumental in turning your head around. When did you first get to see him live?

**WH:** The first time I saw Max was at Howard University. He came in to do a clinic there. I helped him out, set up the drums and stuff. At the time, I just had a stick bag of mine stolen, and Max gave me his stick bag. I was very grateful for that. A couple of years later, I ended up going to Europe with Johnny Griffin and was on the same bill with Max. That was a highlight for me. Just having a chance to see all these guys and be around them; to this day I'm like a kid on Christmas morning. Just knowing that I'm able to be on the same bill or in the same room with people like Max Roach, Billy Higgins, and Billy Hart. In my basement at home in Atlanta, I used to have all their pictures all over my wall. So it's really an honor for me to be in their presence.

**BM:** Do you remember the first time you saw Philly Joe Jones play?

**WH:** Yeah, Billy Hart took me. It was in D.C. at the Kennedy Center. Billy was on

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## Winard's Listeners' Guide

For readers who would like to listen to recordings that best represent your drumming, which ones would you recommend?

Album Title	Artist	Label/Catalog#
Remembrance	Harper Brothers	Polygram/Verve 841723
Duets	Carmen McRae & Betty Carter	Great American Music Hall GAMH 2706
The Harper Brothers	Harper Brothers	Polygram/Verve 837033
Look What I Got	Betty Carter	Polygram/Verve 835661
All Mine All Yours	Ray Bryant	†

Which recordings do you listen to most for inspiration?

Album Title	Artist	Drummer	Label/Catalog#
Jo Jones Trio	Jo Jones	Jo Jones	Everest DBR1023*
Red Garland At Prelude	Red Garland	Specs Wright	Prestige 7170*
Another Workout	Hank Mobley	Philly Joe Jones	Blue Note 84431
Jazz Poet	Tommy Flanagan	Kenny Washington	Timeless*
Kelly At Midnight	Wynton Kelly	Philly Joe Jones	VeeJay*
Elmo Hope Trio	Elmo Hope	Frank Butler	Contemporary LAX3038*
The Sidewinder	Lee Morgan	Billy Higgins	Blue Note 84157
Time After Time	Duke Pearson	Rex Humphries	JazzLine 32JDJT24*

† Catalog# unavailable at press time

\* Out of print





Photo by Ebet Roberts

# Budgie

If there's one thing you can't accuse Budgie and his band, Siouxsie & the Banshees of, it's standing still.

Like the Damned, the Cure, and a few other bands born of British punk, the Banshees (and their spin-off, the Creatures) have shown a growing musical maturity with each new

recording. Back in 1976, though, when the band debuted with *Sid Vicious* of

the Sex Pistols on drums, playing their free-form version of "The Lord's Prayer," chances are that not too many people expected big things from them.

Nonetheless, they continued on, and today are one of the most successful and adventuresome bands of that original British pop renaissance, having released ten albums, plus two albums and an EP under the Creatures banner. Former Slits and Big In Japan

drummer Budgie joined the Banshees following the release of their second album, and has been with them ever since.

Budgie's style has always been very tom-oriented, with his rhythms being a central element to the Banshees' arrangements, which can span from delicacy to near violence. His drumming came to a real forefront, though, with the birth of the Creatures, the voice/percussion duo Budgie and Siouxsie Sioux began experimenting with on a lark nine years ago. Larks often result in some pleasantly surprising results, though, and indeed, *Boomerang*, which represents the first we've heard from the Creatures in seven years, is one of the more interesting percussion-based releases in recent memory. (When was the last time you heard *a pop* record written and performed almost entirely on drumset, marimba, and steel drums?)

After two years spent recording and touring behind the Banshees' last record, *Peepshow*, Siouxsie and Budgie retired to a retreat in

the English countryside of Surrey called the House In The Woods, where the incubation of ideas for *Boomerang* began. Not knowing where they would eventually record the album, the pair took off to Spain with their gear and a mobile studio. After staying in various converted castles and convents, they settled on a working ranch in Jerez, and in a former convent began putting the album together.

The final project in many ways is as satisfying as any Banshees project.

Because the duo limit their musical tools to percussion and voice—with the possibility of adding horn overdubs later—melodic lines had to either come from the drums or mallet instruments.

Since Budgie is no expert in those fields, he was left up to his own devices to build the Creatures' songs almost from scratch. In this case, a little knowledge went a long way. But let's go back to the beginning and find out how this unusual project began....

BY ADAM BUDOFISKY



**Budgie:** In 1981, when we were rehearsing for the Siouxsie & the Banshees *Juju* album, Siouxsie and I were playing a track called "But Not Them," while [bassist] Steve Severin and [guitarist] John McGeoch were out of the studio having some coffee. When they came back, they said, "Sounds great, let's just leave it like that and work on it in the studio." We ended up having more than enough material for *Juju*, so once we finished the album, "But Not Them" was still sitting around. Later Siouxsie and I decided to try to make something out of that kind of an idea—just using the drums.

It was really an electric kind of atmosphere—just the two of us; we didn't know what was going to happen. It was quite on the edge. So we worked out roughly "But Not Them," "So Unreal," "Mad Eyed Screamer," and a version of "Wild Thing" by the Troggs—with nothing else, just the drums. Then for three days we went into a brand new studio that Mike Hedges co-owned. This was the first time we had worked with him. [*Hedges would later become a constant production companion to the Banshees.*] So we put down the five tracks and mixed them. We didn't do any EQ on the drums—they were recorded flat—and it was live, more or less all first takes. And

from there we just built up percussive layers.

**AB:** What sort of drums were you using at the time?

**Budgie:** I'd just gotten a new Gretsch kit at the time. When I joined the band I'd inherited a big black Pearl kit with heavy heads on it, like Remo *CS Black Dots*, and that was the Banshee drum sound I had kind of adopted—"thud thud thud thud." I'm not saying it was bad, because Kenny Morris, who I had replaced, was a good drummer. I actually adopted a lot of his style by learning his parts. But when I got down to this rehearsal space, they imported some Gretsch shells. I put on white *Ambassadors*, and that for me was the biggest change. It was like, "Wow, this is what drums should sound like." They should resonate. I'd heard the shells on their own, and there were the *notes*, and I thought, "Well, I've got to keep this," and I put some bottom heads on as well.

That's really where I started to learn my own personal way of treating drums. I didn't put anything on the kick drum so that the shell wasn't interrupted at all, and I used a floor stand for the toms. I think that's when I started to become aware of the tuning of the drums, because I had to work more closely with the vocals. I didn't *tune* to specific notes, but I definitely had to *coordinate* the

notes.

While we were doing this recording, which would end up being the Creatures' EP *Wild Things*, I'd gotten a marimba, and we'd start to pick out the notes of the drums with it. There's a song called "Thumb" on there, where it's a drum pattern from the floor tom up to the top rack tom, just building over a phrase. I used the marimba to pick out the notes and play harmonies with that. So we started to do songs that had the melodies suggested by just the drums. And the more that I did it, the more tuneful they got. Sometimes it would jibe with the chords of the song, sometimes it made weird kinds of fourths and fifths and different musical intervals. What we're doing now really developed from there.

**AB:** You don't use that kit anymore, do you?

**Budgie:** The Gretsch kit toured with me for years, and I wanted to keep it, but it was getting knocked around a bit. I loved the sound I got from it. I put it on a Pearl rack, but now it's gone into storage for a while, because Tama approached me with a deal. It was like being a kid in a candy store: "I'll have one of those, and one of those..." [laughs]

**AB:** Did this new choice allow you to experiment more with "tuning" your kit?

**Budgie:** Well, I got one of those 20" gong

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## Budgie's Listeners' Guide

For readers who would like to listen to recordings that best represent your drumming, which ones would you recommend?

Album Title	Artist	Label/Catalog#
Boomerang	The Creatures	Polydor/Geffen GHS-24275
Peepshow	Siouxsie & The Banshees	Polydor/Geffen GHS-24205
Feast	The Creatures	-
Kaleidoscope	Siouxsie & The Banshees	Polydor/Geffen GHS-24048
Wild Thing (EP)	The Creatures	-
Cut	The Slits	Island/Antilles 7077
Tinderbox	Siouxsie & The Banshees	Polydor/Geffen GHS-24092
Juju	Siouxsie & The Banshees	Polydor/Geffen GHS-24050

Which recordings do you listen to most for inspiration?

Album Title	Artist	Drummer
Symphony No. 5 in D*	Dmitri Shostakovich	Maxim Shostakovich, Conductor
Clear Spot*	Captain Beefheart	Drumbo (John French)
Berlin	Lou Reed	Aynsley Dunbar
Opener*	Can	Jaki Liebezeit
any	Jimi Hendrix	Mitch Mitchell
first greatest hits album (w/ Peter Green)*	Fleetwood Mac	Mick Fleetwood
TV Documentary video	Kodo Drummers Of Sado	

with Honorary Mentions to Charlie Watts, Ringo, and John Bonham

\*Most of the albums Budgie listed as inspirational and some of the Creatures' records were out of print or unavailable at press time. But with the record industry's pleasantly surprising habit of reissuing more and more obscure albums on CD these days, there's a good chance many of these will be made available in the near future.

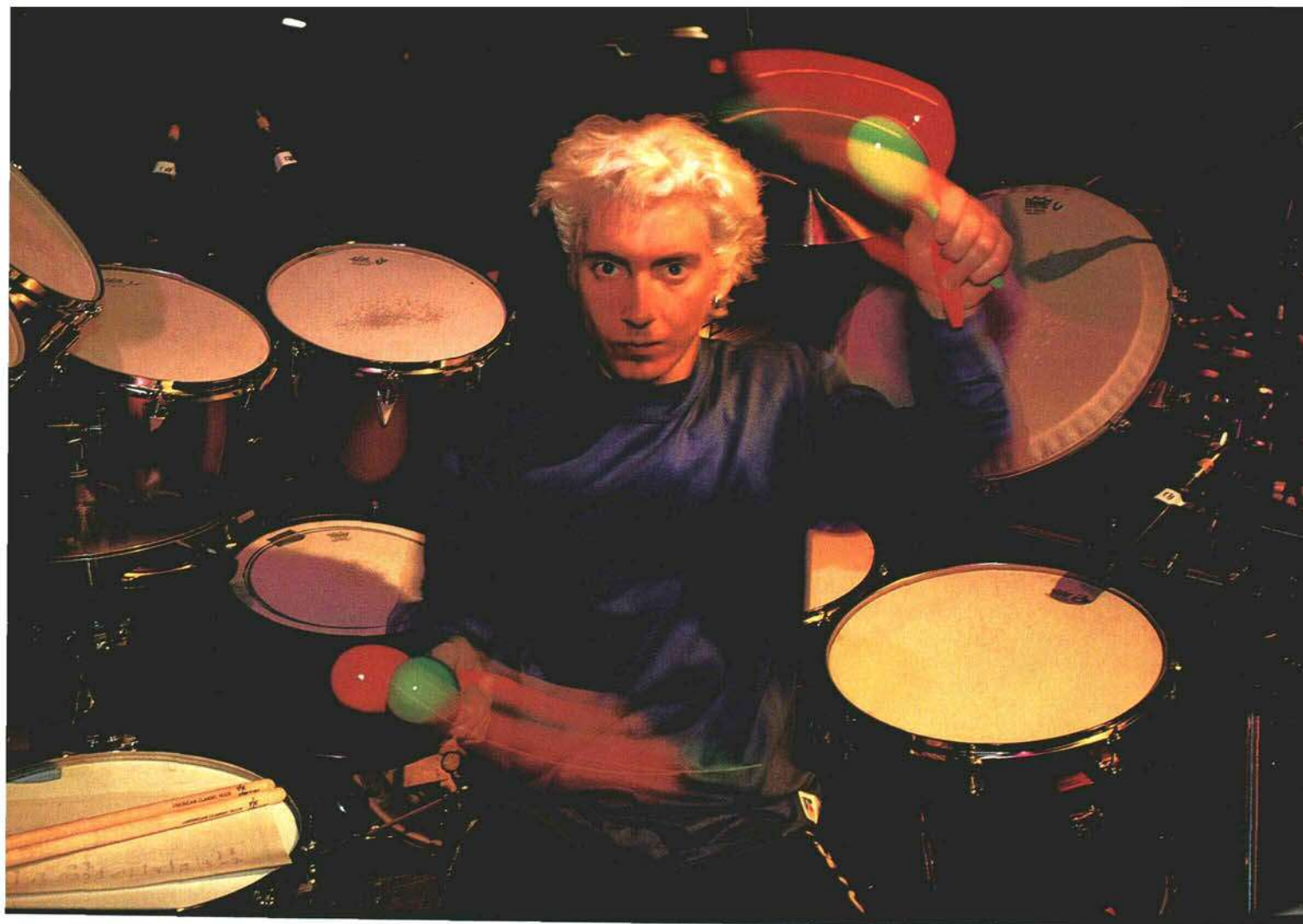


Photo by Ebet Roberts

According to Budgie, "This is my basic kit as it stands after ten years of development with Siouxsie & the Banshees. On the most recent tour with the Creatures, the bass drum was fitted with triggers to drive a Kahler *Human Clock* to fire the sequencers, enabling me to control the tempo of the show from the drum seat! Clear as a bell?"

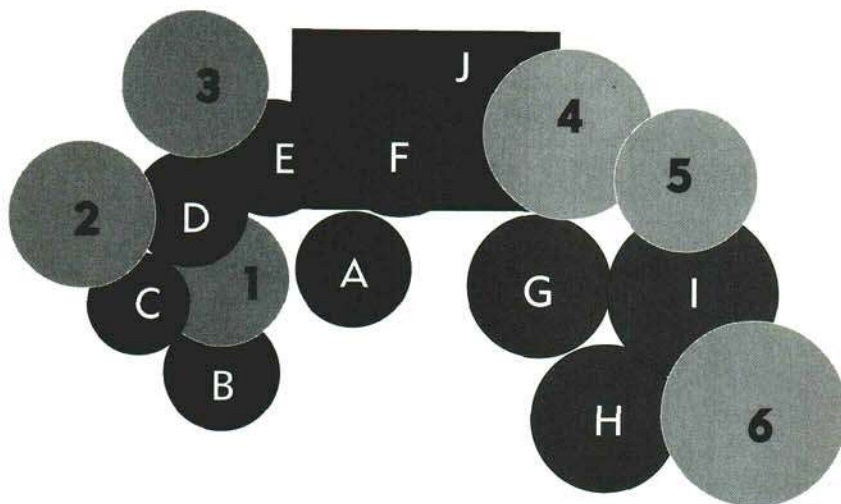
**Drumset:** Tama *Granstar* in red wine finish.

- A. 8 x 14 wood snare (Sonor *Phonic Plus*)
- B. 3 1/2 x 14 piccolo snare (Pearl)
- C. 6 x 13 timbale
- D. 6 x 14 timbale
- E. 14 x 14 tom
- F. 15 x 15 tom
- G. 16 x 16 floor tom
- H. 18 x 18 floor tom
- I. 18 x 20 gong drum
- J. 16 x 22 bass drum

**Cymbals:** Zildjian

- 1. 15" New *Beat* hi-hats (with a Rhythm-Tech DST [ching ring] attached)
- 2. 18" *China Boy* low
- 3. 18" medium-thin crash
- 4. 20" *Rock* ride
- 5. 16" medium-thin crash
- 6. 22" *China Boy* low (swish)

## Budgie's Equipment



**Hardware:** All hardware Tama, including a *Power Tower* rack system.

**Heads:** Remo coated *Pinstripe* on snare. Remo coated *Ambassadors* on toms. Remo *Pinstripe* on bass drum. Premier SD *Field Batter* on piccolo.

**Sticks:** Vic Firth *Rock* model.

**Electronics:** In his live setup, Budgie uses two Akai *S1000* samplers, an *S900* sampler, a Kahler *Human Clock*, two Roland MC500 sequencers, a Sony DAT 1000 ES, a Korg *MI Workstation*, and a Roland *Octapad II*.



# PRODUCERS ON

While *MD* usually asks drummers about what producers expect from them, for a change we thought we'd go straight to the horse's mouth—and talk to some producers about drummers. Each of the producers we spoke to is an expert in a different genre of music: Tom Werman in heavy rock, Russ Titelman in pop, Josh Leo in country, and Jeff Weber in jazz. The wealth of combined experience these producers have gathered over the years in their respective fields should give an overall picture of what today's producers require from their drummers in the studio.

## TOM WERMAN

*The name Tom Werman is synonymous with heavy metal success. Although he would like to try his hand at some pop/rock producing, Werman has almost become typecast due to his reputation. During his 12 years as an A&R man at CBS, he produced such acts as Ted Nugent, Cheap Trick (In Color, Heaven Tonight, Dream Police), Molly Hatchet, Mother's Finest, Blue Oyster Cult, and Jeff Beck. Since leaving CBS and working for Elektra and as an independent, Tom has produced powerhouse bands like Stryper (Against The Law, just recently out), Poison (Open Up And Say... Ahh!), Motley Crue (Shout At The Devil, Theater Of Pain, Girls, Girls, Girls, L.A. Guns (Cocked And Loaded,), and Kix. Such a resume means Werman has had to work closely with such drummers as Bun E. Carlos, Robert Sweet, Rikki Rockett, Tommy Lee, Steve Riley, and Jimmy Chalfant.*

**RF:** What would make a drummer stand out to you in the studio?

**TW:** Meter—their ability to be a metronome. Bun E. is clearly the human metronome, and yet he's not robotic at all. He puts down the most solid groove I've ever seen of any drummer. He, for me, is probably the most satisfying live drummer I've ever seen, as well. I love him for what he doesn't play as much as for what he plays and how he plays it. And he does it effortlessly—almost all from the wrist.

When I was doing pre-production with Poison a couple of years ago, Rikki Rockett was having trouble with one particular turn-around that he just couldn't feel properly. He's very serious about his work, so he called Bun E. and asked him if he might help him out with this little problem. Bun E. came down and spent two hours working with him, which was a very nice thing to do.

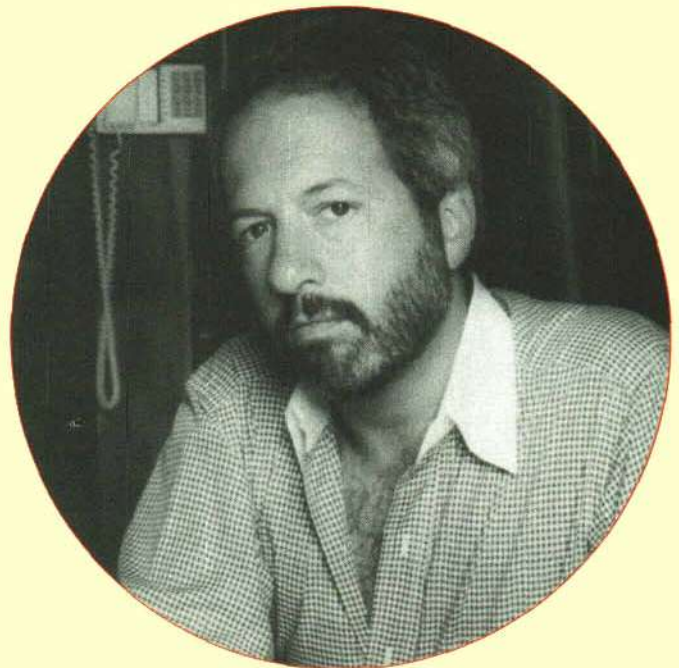
Bun E. used to do his tracks in the shortest amount of time possible, and I swear, as soon as the tape stopped rolling, he'd say, "Tom, is that it?" I'd say, "I think that's it Bun E.," and he was gone. He used to hang a sign that said, "Gone Fishing."

**RF:** There is a stereotype that drummers in this genre of music are not as technique-minded as in other types of music. What do you think about that?

**TW:** It's true. I agree with that.

**RF:** Is that a problem, or is that okay when producing this kind of music?

**TW:** It's never really been a problem, even before sampling and SMPTE. Perhaps we'd start off with a click, and the drummer might go up and down and back and forth in the time, but if it felt good, we'd use it. I always enjoyed the human feel, and nobody was ever that bad that I couldn't use the track. Some drummers slow down when they do a fill, some drummers speed through their fills, and some drummers have really inconsistent feet, where you have to go and sample the foot



again.

**RF:** You've never had to call in a ringer?

**TW:** Never. I don't call in ringers for anybody ever. I think if a producer is going to accept a project, he'd better accept the players. You're there to evaluate the band, not the individuals. I wouldn't even have the heart to do that.

**RF:** Drummers are the ones who get replaced the most often.

**TW:** That's true, but in the kind of music that I'm usually asked to do, the drummer plays such an integral role that if you remove him, you remove the vibe—the feel of the band, the identity. Look at Motley Crue. If you remove any of the musicians in that band, there's absolutely no band.

**RF:** Do you employ a lot of electronics?

**TW:** Only when I have to. I feel pretty much that computer technology is the worst thing that ever happened to music, because it gave birth to robotic music. The dance music and the rap music of today, as far as I'm concerned—and I'll catch hell for this—is on a sub-human level. I really believe a lot of these dance records sound precisely the same. When you use the machines, all the originality goes out of music.

**RF:** So how do you utilize electronics?

**TW:** Take Robert Sweet of Stryper, who is a fantastic drummer; he's so strong, and he hits very hard. On the most recent Stryper record, he had to tune his snare head tight because he didn't get the bounce that he needed, but I didn't like the sound that gave the drum. It was just too pingy for my taste. So we used his snare, but we made it a hybrid by mixing in a sample,

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# DRUMMERS

BY ROBYN FLANS

## RUSS TITELMAN

*Russ Titelman began his A&R/staff production position with Warner Bros. Records two decades ago in Los Angeles. For the past seven years he has maintained the same position in New York. Twenty years of pop/rock production adds up to working with a lot of drummers, and among the notables have been Jeff Porcaro (Rickie Lee Jones, Randy Newman), John Robinson (Rufus & Chaka Khan and Steve Winwood's landmark *Back In The High Life*), Jim Keltner (most recently on Eric Clapton's *Journeyman*), Steve Ferrone and Phil Collins (also on the Clapton LP), Steve Gadd (Rickie Lee Jones), and Andy Newmark (George Harrison's 1987 self-titled LP). And, he says, we shouldn't forget Jimmy Bralower, whose talents are extremely important to what he does.*

**RF:** You tend to work with session players, but what happens if a self-contained group comes to you? Do you usually replace the band's drummer with a studio drummer?

**RT:** I haven't actually worked with a self-contained group in a long time. The closest I got to it was on Eric Clapton's record, because his band is Steve Ferrone, Nathan East [bass], and Greg Phillinganes [keyboards]; they were on a lot of the *Journeyman* album. We did some experimenting with some other types of music, like some old blues and different things, so we brought in Keltner to do some of that, to have a little bit of different color on the record.

**RF:** I'm curious why you make the hiring decisions you make, such as in the case of the Steve Winwood album.

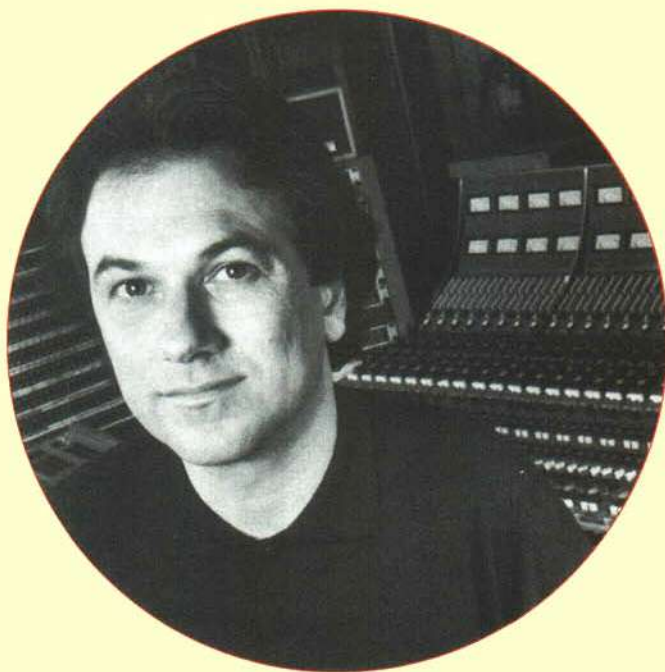
**RT:** With the Winwood stuff, I just sort of knew that John Robinson would be the right drummer for the record, because I had worked with him before. It's like being a casting director.

**RF:** What qualities do you look for in the session musicians you hire?

**RT:** Each one of them has his own special talent. All of them have quite a broad musical knowledge; they can do almost anything. I would be happy with any of them, but, say, Steve Ferrone might be a little more comfortable in an R&B framework, although Jeff Porcaro can play it, and John Robinson is a great R&B player too, which is how I met him. I met him when he was on Rufus & Chaka Khan, and he was great. I also used him on a George Benson record, and he played a big band thing that we did. When I was making Chaka Khan's last album, a lot of it was drum machine, but Ferrone played on the two live jazz things that Dave Grusin arranged, and he was spectacular. You'd normally think of him as a funk drummer, but he did these great jazz tracks.

**RF:** What qualities make a good studio drummer, generally speaking?

**RT:** To start off with, they have to be at a certain professional level, but they also have to be malleable and be able to take direction within a context. I would never dream of telling a



musician exactly what to play, but if there's a specific idea, I'll make suggestions or say, "This fill doesn't work there," or, "Maybe we should change the kick drum pattern," and we'll work on something to get the right part. All of these guys have a great attitude about it. It's like we're all working toward one end to get the best part and the best record. Since the Winwood record, I've been doing the drum parts in pieces. We'll do a hi-hat first and then a kick and snare, and then overdub the toms and cymbals. We did a lot of the Winwood album that way.

**RF:** Where do you stand with electronics?

**RT:** I really like it. On most of the records that I work on, I find that I'm drawn to a mix of machine and real drums.

**RF:** Could you talk about specific records or tracks that might lend themselves to some discussion about that?

**RT:** "Higher Love," from Winwood's *Back In The High Life* album—that whole album was made with a machine first. The drum machine was laid down, sequenced bass and keyboard parts were put down, and then we built on it from there and started overdubbing. In some cases, the parts were copied and replaced. "Higher Love" had a machine hi-hat and a real hi-hat, and they weren't playing exactly the same thing. It also had a programmed kick and snare with John's sound. We wrote that part. It had real drum fills, including the snare, real cymbal crashes, a machine tambourine, a real tambourine, and a machine conga and real conga.

**RF:** What about the *Journeyman* album?

**RT:** I had various things. "Breaking Point," "Run So Far," and

*continued on page 115*



# JOSH LEO

*Josh Leo is among the new breed of producers in Nashville. He has helped formulate a healthy attitude towards recording drums on "the third coast," even using such band members as the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band's Jimmie Fadden and Alabama's Mark Herndon on the recordings, which is something not often done.*

*Beginning his career as an artist and budding producer in L.A., Leo used Jeff Porcaro and John Robinson on ex-Eagle Timothy B. Schmit's solo record. In L.A., he also used Mike Baird, Craig Krampf, and Harry Stinson, and has worked with Krampf and Stinson since coming to Nashville in 1985 as well. In addition, he used Eddie Bayers and Paul Leim on a rock 'n' roll project for Greg Barnhill.*

**RF:** What qualities do you look for in a recording drummer? What do you like about the musicians you use?

**JL:** I like good time, but it's not necessarily essential. Most of the time we will play to a click track, but it's not always the case that we have to do it. A lot of times it doesn't feel good with the click track, because it doesn't have room to breathe. Sometimes you want a song to almost slow down a little bit to allow the singer to do his pickup. If you're cutting to a click and it's slapping you in the head all the time, it gets real mechanical. Also, as kids, all of us played in bands where we sped up a little bit at the end of a song because we were excited, so I don't mind if that happens. If it really speeds up, sure, I'm not going to go for that. But a little excitement doesn't hurt.

**RF:** What other qualities do you want?

**JL:** Sounds, obviously. I like a drummer who has got good sounds, and that doesn't necessarily mean sampled sounds. I'm not real big on a ton of electronic drums. I would rather get great drum sounds from the engineer using room mic's and miking techniques, rather than say, "Don't worry about it, we'll cut the track with this set of drums and then put samples on everything," which is a disease that a lot of people have now. Sometimes we will use a sample of a snare drum mixed in with the real snare drum.

**RF:** Can you give some examples?

**JL:** Steve Marcantonio is the engineer I use, and we did it on Juice Newton's *Ain't Gonna Cry* on some songs. It just depends on the song. Sometimes we'll cut a track with one sound in mind, and by the time we get to mixing, that snare or kick drum is just not cutting through with the 150 overdubs that we've put on there. We did it on one or two songs on the last Alabama record, and we'll probably end up doing it on some of the upcoming Alabama stuff.

**RF:** When I asked you about qualities you like in a drummer, you brought up sounds. How much do you actually rely on the drummer for the sound, as opposed to the engineer?

**JL:** We would hope that the drummer would come in with amazing sounds. John Robinson is great for that.

**RF:** How so, if you're not talking specifically about samples?

**JL:** He uses a little bit of samples mixed in with his set. He'll have pick-ups on, say, his snare, that will trigger a snare sound from his rack, and then it will be up to the engineer to mix those together. Eddie Bayers is another guy who will do that, as well as Paul Leim. They have great racks, and they will give you the natural sound as well as a drum machine sound that you can mix together on one track. Or you can put it all on different tracks to create the ambient drum sound that you're looking for without using a bunch of reverbs to do it. Drummers like Harry Stinson and Craig Krampf normally just have good-sounding drums.

**RF:** Obviously you change from project to project, but could you give a general answer as to what drum sound you go for?



**JL:** It varies so much. On the Juice Newton record, Harry Stinson used a real skinny snare drum that might have been a piccolo. It's real thin with a lot of crack to it. I favor that over a tubby snare drum like some of the old Eagles records. Although on one song on the new Alabama record, "Juke Box In My Mind," we're purposely going for an old-fashioned sound with a big old drumkit. We close-miked everything and tried to get it to sound as old-fashioned as possible without a lot of room mic's. I think we put a blanket over the bass drum to make it sound real dead, which is something I haven't done since the '70s, and we were going for a real thick snare sound that sounds like a cardboard box or something. But I like the thinner ones that crack through a lot easier.

I really like ambient room sound on the drums—not long echoes, but short echoes. We always use room microphones. We'll set up mic's on the kick, the snare, the toms, and the cymbals, and we'll use the overheads. We'll also put two microphones way out in the big room and pick up the overall drumset from 20' back and 15' or 20' in the air, and mix that in on two tracks as the room sound. I favor that more than a bunch of long echoes.

**RF:** What are the good drum rooms in Nashville?

**JL:** There aren't any. We cut at Emerald a lot, which I think is one of the best studios here. Digital is also a good room for drums, and I've heard that Omni is good. Nightingale is a small room, but it's nice.

**RF:** So if there aren't any great drum rooms, what's lacking?

**JL:** Size. Digital is the biggest room down here. If you cut drums in the big room, they sound like rock 'n' roll drums. I wish someone would build a big studio in this town—a big main room with at least four isolation booths, because I like to do stuff live. I don't like to do a ton of overdubs.

**RF:** Do you usually cut drums live with a rhythm section?

**JL:** Oh, yes. On this Alabama record I'm coproducing with Larry Lee right now, even the lead vocals are live. A lot of times I'll have three or four guitar players, a keyboard player, bass, and drums, and if we can we'll get the lead vocalist to sing. We like to keep as much as we can.

**RF:** What is the Nashville focus on drums?

**JL:** The old school—and there are still a lot of those people

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# JEFF WEBER

*Jeff Weber says he's been the luckiest producer in the world—if for no other reason than the list of drummers with whom he's had the opportunity to work. And it is a prestigious list: Alex Acuna, Carlos Vega, Vinnie Colaiuta, Jeff Porcaro, Gregg Bissonette, Andy Newmark, Ricky Lawson, Jonathan Moffet, Tom Brechtlein, Harvey Mason, Bud Harner, Louie Bellson (including his first Grammy nomination, Note Smoking), John Guerin, John Ferraro, John Robinson, Walfredo Reyes, Jr. and Sr., Peter Erskine, Joey Heredia, Ralph Humphrey, Art Rodriguez, Earl Palmer, Tris Imboden, Carl Hatam, Tom Walsh, Joel Taylor, Al Foster, Jim Keltner, Shelly Manne, Tony Morales, Bill Maxwell, Joe Porcaro, John Dentz, Greg Smith, Ricky Sebastian, Daduka Fonesca, Andre Fisher, and Jody Cortez.*

*Weber's specialty is jazz, live to two-track, although he also records live to multi-tracks. Either way, "live" is the operative word, and particularly in the former format a certain caliber of musician is required.*

**RF:** What makes a drummer great for you to work with?

**JW:** I used to think that drummers were just drummers, but drummers have a certain specialization, and it's gotten to the point where it's almost a science. There are certain drummers that I use when grooves are important. First of all, I hate drum machines, though they're a necessary evil. I like real people. There's an ebb and a flow in a song that a real drummer can supply and a machine can't. So there are drummers that you use for grooves and who you know are great when it comes to doing fills, but aren't necessarily the most creative. Then there are those drummers who have a flair and a creative imagination. They can also carry a groove, but they're so creative on interpretation, ends of phrases, fills, and other things, that you just marvel at the fact that they can play less and it can sound more powerful. An equally important thing that I require is for the drums to sound great on record. These drummers have a tendency to have good cartage people who are very protective of their drums, and they set them up well and tune them, etc. You get spoiled by the fact that the drum sounds take 20 minutes or less to get because the drums sound fantastic right from the beginning, and cymbals sound clear and clean, etc. You can throw up any mic' and get killer stuff. There are no rattles, no hums; these are the pros.

By and large, most of the guys that I've worked with know that I like to put them on the edge and let them create their own space. I don't like to tell drummers of that caliber what to do because, first of all, anything they do will enhance my project by the very nature of what they do naturally. It would be rather foolish of me to put fences around what they do. I hire those guys for what I know they'll add.

**RF:** Are there qualities that are integral to the kind of recording you mostly do that perhaps wouldn't be as crucial in an overdubbing situation?

**JW:** My specialty is live to two-tracks or to multi-tracks. I try to go for an energy and a magic that multi-track, overdubbed recording can't give you. So I'm looking for a performance-type player, not someone who needs the studio technology to bolster him.

**RF:** You really need a drummer who reads, don't you?

**JW:** I oftentimes need a drummer who reads, because sometimes we don't have the money for rehearsal.

**RF:** Yet Jeff Porcaro says he's not a great reader.

**JW:** There's a difference sometimes between reading and feeling. There are people like Jeff who are such artists that reading brings their creative level down.

**RF:** And the spontaneity is part of their thing.



**JW:** That's what I love about it; that's the magic of it. I like to hear the guys who play on everybody's records get excited about what they're doing, and I'm real lucky that on some of the projects I've been associated with, these session guys are excited about them.

**RF:** Can you give us some specific tracks that might have been incredibly magical in their coming together?

**JW:** Jeff and I recently worked together on a record called *Soldiers On The Moon* by David Lasley, a great singer/songwriter. The rhythm section was fantastic. It was Jeff, Abe Laborial, Luis Conte, Bob Mann, and Marty Walsh. This was a live to two-track digital recording. David will go with the musical vibe, so if he doesn't like the song that he's doing, he'll tell everybody to stop, and he'll go into another song that maybe the other guys don't know. There's a very unusual weaving that has to go on, and the musicians have to be flexible enough to go with it. A lot of times musicians work on an hourly basis, and there's a definite structure involved, but for this particular project Jeff was phenomenal. The thing with Jeff was that everything was going wrong, but he wanted so much to do the record, and he made everybody come to grips with the fact that this was a special musical record.

We also did the David Benoit record, *Waiting For Spring*, which is on the charts right now, and which has Peter Erskine on drums. We did that record in a day, just for fun, and it went to number one. The budget on the record was \$15,000. We just went in and played, and had fun. We did it live to two-track, and it was magical.

**RF:** In a situation like that, was there any rehearsing? How did you make it come down in a day and a half?

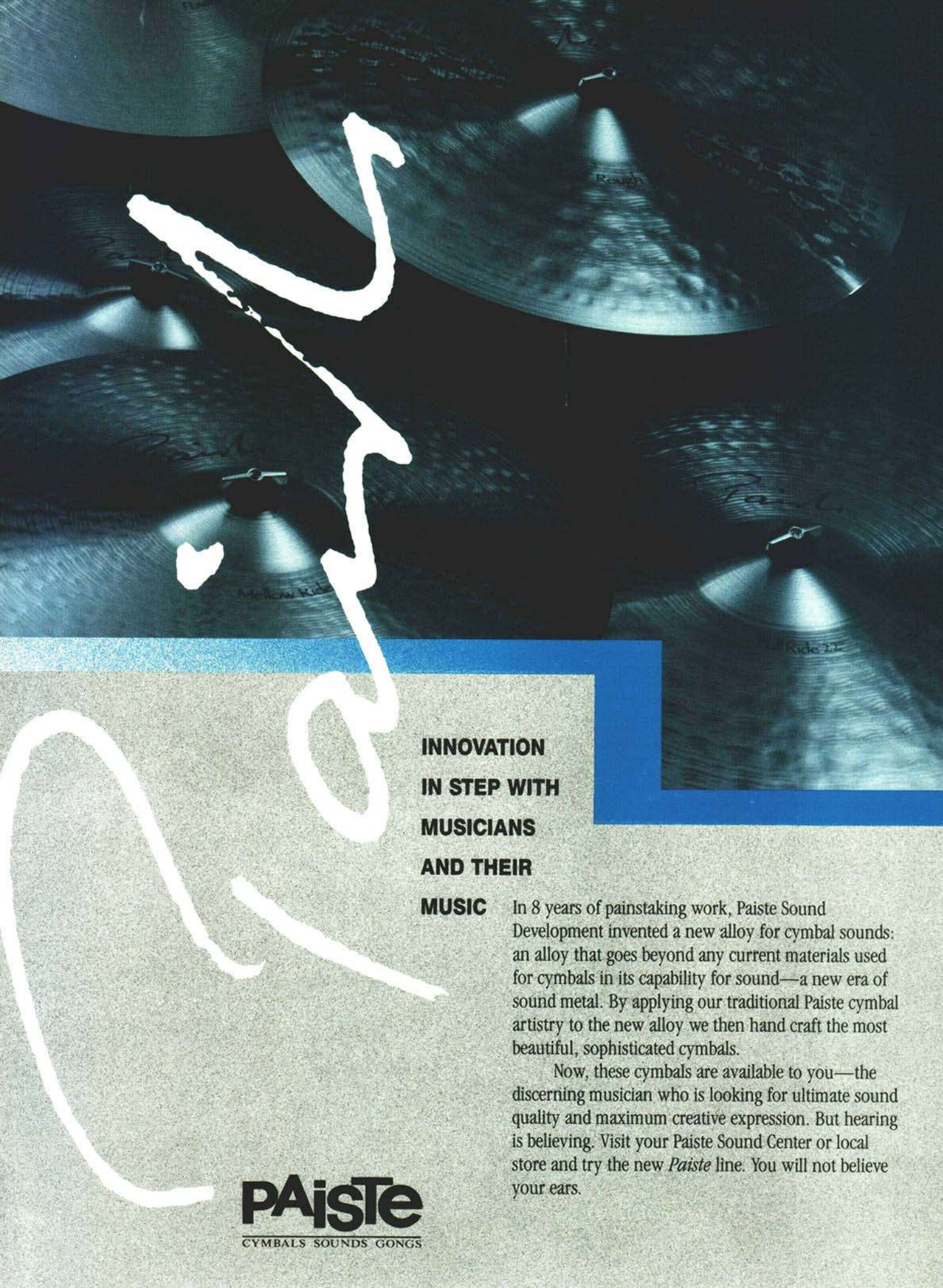
**JW:** Basically, on that particular record, because the arrangements were unique and David wanted things in a specific way, we did have one or two very brief rehearsals prior to going into the studio, just so people could figure out what the form of the music was.

**RF:** What do you go for in a drum sound?

**JW:** If I lean over the console, turn up the volume, and my shirt moves, then there's enough punch to the kick drum. If I'm not flapping in the breeze, it ain't happening. Honest to God, that's

*continued on page 116*





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# Brady Drumkit And Snares

• by Rick Van Horn

When I first interviewed Chris Brady for the March, 1986 *MD*, he was involved in making custom-crafted snare drums from the indigenous hardwoods of his native Western Australia. At that time, his operation was pretty much a one-man show, but he had big dreams. He was looking forward to the day when he could apply his craftsmanship and knowledge of wood to the production of complete drumkits for discerning drummers.

Well, a little over four years later, Chris's dreams seem to have come true. Brady drums are now in production, and have just recently become available in the U.S. We were able to test the first kit to hit these shores, through the courtesy of Steve Arnold at Manny's Music in New York. It consisted of one 16x22 bass drum, 8x8, 10x10, 12x12, and 14x14 rack toms, a 16x16 floor tom, and two snare drums, which will be described later.

## Drumkit Construction

The first thing that sets Brady drums apart from all other brands is the wood from which they are made. The bass drums and toms are made from ten plies of jarrah, an Australian hardwood one and a half times as hard as rock maple and almost twice as hard as birch. According to the Brady catalog, this greater hardness offers "a broader sonic range" than the other woods can produce. The shells are also manufactured using a different process than most other plywood shells: Brady uses extreme pressure rather than steam to bend the plies into shape. Tom shells are 1/4" thick; bass drum shells are 3/8" thick—and both are quite heavy. The shells are finished entirely by hand, with special attention to the bearing edges (referred to as "slate perfect" in the catalog).

The shells are fitted with solid brass chromed tubular lugs, mounted to the shells at two small contact points with one screw at each point. These contact points

are further isolated from the shell with rubber washers. All rack toms are fitted with RIMS mounts, because Brady believes that "the use of RIMS allows production of a truer sound with a clearer fundamental tone, more prominent lows, and an undistorted overtone series with increased sustain." The floor tom on our test kit had traditional legs.

Brady offers no pedals or stands with its kits, and the mounting hardware to be used with the RIMS mounts is up to the buyer. Our test kit happened to be fitted out with Pearl mounts on the toms and a Pearl shell-mounted tom holder on the bass drum. The company suggests that rack-mounting is an excellent way to go, since no fittings are required on the bass drum.

## Appearance

Another area in which Brady drums differ from most others is in their look. Several finishes are available, including natural satin, cherry red gloss, black gloss, walnut stain, piano white, and either white or silver gimlet. While solid gloss colors are not unique, the other finishes are, simply because of the grain structure of the wood being stained or lacquered. And the gimlet finishes are especially unusual, owing to the fact that they are created by laminating one ply of a tremendously "burled" wood over

the other jarrah plies. Our photo gives an impression of the white gimlet finish that came on our test kit, but does not do it complete justice. It's the type of finish that you either love or hate, and I must honestly report that not everyone who saw the kit liked its look. In fact, some disliked it intensely. However, I noticed that the kit took on an entirely different aspect under colored stage lights—rather than in our testing room under standard fluorescent lighting. The more familiar natural finish or walnut stain over the jarrah wood give the drums the look of fine furniture (and I mean that in the most complimentary sense), and the gloss finishes (as represented by the black gloss on one of our test snare drums) are excellent, as well. No effort has been spared to make Brady drums *look* as good as they sound.

## Sound

And they do sound good—very good. Apparently, Brady's theories regarding how their harder shells improve the drum sound are valid, because I've never played a more powerful—yet full-bodied—set of drums. I've played sets that were as loud, and perhaps brighter. But those tended to accent the attack of the drums, and sacrificed some of the low end and roundness of sound that I prefer. Not so



Photo by Scott G. Brienstock



with the Brady drums; they cut through everything loud and clear, but did so with depth and tone that were impressive.

The drums came from Manny's after being on their floor for a short time, and the toms were fitted with slightly used *Pinstripe* heads on top and clear *Ambassadors* on the bottom. The bass drum had a *Pinstripe* batter and an *Ebony* front head with no hole. It was fitted with a Remo *Muff'l* against the batter. The drums all tuned up quickly and well, so I didn't change any heads. I debated removing the *Muff'l*, because I'm not partial to internal muffling devices, but I decided to listen to the bass drum on stage first. I'm glad I did, because the drum sounded deep and powerful, with plenty of boom still present. Without a hole in the front head, I figured that the *Muff'l* was a good idea—especially since I did plan to test-mike the bass drum.

As you might have guessed from the power sizes of the toms, the kit worked wonderfully for rock music requiring a big sound. But, perhaps surprisingly, there was no lack of sensitivity from the drums at lower volumes—even with the *Pinstripe* heads. The drums could be played quite softly, and they *still* sounded big and fat.

When it came time to try miking the drums (which I would only suggest for *extremely* loud situations), I found that the resonance of the toms created some difficulties. There was just so much sound from the drums that control was a problem. As a result, I had to muffle the toms slightly (using Yamaha *Ring Arrestors*) and roll off a little low-end on the EQ settings for a couple of the drums. But what came out of the P.A. speakers was nothing short of devastating, so there was certainly no sacrifice made. I found that since there was no hole in the front bass drum head I had a ring problem there, so I taped a small foam pad to the outside of the front head. With only that modification, the bass drum came

through deep, punchy, and immense. I don't think you can ask for more.

The only real problem I had with the Brady kit at all was that of drum placement, owing to the large sizes of the drums and the Pearl mounts. With the "square" tom sizes, I would opt for a mounting system that provided for a bit tighter placement, such as the L-post styles offered by Tama, DW or Ludwig. If you are not a rock player, and might be using only the smaller rack toms, you could probably get away with any mounting system.

### The Snare Drums

I've set this section apart because the two snare drums we tested differed from the drumkit. Chris Brady lives and breathes snare drums, and his creations are a reflection of his dedication. Several varieties are offered by the company, including "piccolo-types" that are unlike any others made: 12" diameter drums made of wandoos in a block construction manner (similar to conga drums). Wandoos are over twice as hard as maple, and the sound produced by a solid-wood wandoos shell is simply incomparable. I tested a 7x12 drum that totally surprised me. I expected it to be in a high pitch range, owing to its small diameter. But I was not prepared for the underlying depth and tone that the deep shell and the hardness of the wood provided. I cannot use a "traditional" piccolo snare drum for an entire night; I just don't care for the limited sound spectrum such a drum offers. But I found that I *could* use the 7x12 wandoos drum all night long, enjoying its clear, penetrating crack and its full-bodied tone. It's still a high-pitched drum, to be sure, but it has something *below* that high pitch that makes it an extremely versatile drum, too. And a nice side-feature was that with its smaller diameter, it allowed me easier access to my double bass drum and hi-hat pedals. (My

legs are short, and a wide leg spread is uncomfortable for me.)

The other snare included with the kit was a 6 1/2 x 14 jarrah ply snare, finished in black gloss. As you might expect, it had a deeper fundamental pitch than the 7x12, along with excellent projection. I found that it had the "snare drum equivalent" of the sound characteristics of the toms and bass drums. I could tune it up fairly high, but preferred the wandoos block drum for that range. This drum gave a better account of itself at the mid- to low-tuning ranges.

Both snare drums were fitted with simple throw-offs and tension adjustments at both ends of the snares. I like this feature, because it allows for easy positioning of the snare set precisely where you want it for maximum snare response.

### Conclusion

I had a great time testing these drums. They look different, they sound great, and they are made with loving care. Although their sheer size might be a bit daunting to those used to smaller drums, they are *not* limited to big-scale gigs in terms of performance or musicality. Fitted out with thinner, coated heads, I believe that these drums would be amazing for jazz playing, where liveliness and sensitivity are assets. There's no question that they would meet and exceed all needs for club work and rock concert performance.

Of course, quality in sound and construction doesn't come cheap, and neither do goods imported from halfway around the world. Our test kit of toms and bass drum would be priced in the neighborhood of \$5,000 in the U.S.; the jarrah ply snare lists for \$610; the wandoos block snare goes for \$782. But, as usual, you get what you pay for. And in this instance, you just might also get an additional something—intangible, but nonetheless valuable: drums that are genuinely *unique*. Brady drums will be available in select retail outlets shortly; in the meantime, contact Jewel Distribution, 156 W. 48th Street, New York, NY 10036, (212) 827-0454 for further information.

### MD's Sound System

For the purpose of product reviews involving drum and/or cymbal miking, MD employs the following equipment: Shure *SM98*, *SM91*, and *SM57* microphones, Zildjian *ZMC-10* Cymbal Microphone System, Seek *122* 12-channel stereo mixer, Shure *M268* mixers, (2) JBL/UREI 6260 power amplifier, JBL *4602B Cabaret Series* monitor speakers (2).

Photo by Scott G. Blensack



6 1/2 x 14 Jarrah Ply Snare



7x12 Wandoos Block Snare

# Pearl Quarter Toms

■ by Rick Van Horn

Pearl's *Quarter Toms* are a quartet of single-headed, deep-shelled toms designed to offer unusual melodic and percussive sounds to a traditional drumkit or percussion setup. Comparisons with Tama's *Octobans* are unavoidable, but there are some significant differences between the two. First, where *Octobans* are 8" in diameter, *Quarter Toms* are 6"; second, where *Octobans* feature synthetic shells, *Quarter Toms* feature aluminum shells, approximately 1/8" thick. The drums are available in white or black, and are fitted with four tuning lugs and mounts for Pearl's familiar protrusion-type tubular tom arms. The shells are 12", 15", 18", and 20" in depth, and so would require a floor stand or positioning on a drum rack for convenient mounting around the kit. Our test models came fitted with clear Remo CS *Black Dot* heads.

The best thing that the *Quarter Toms* have going for them is volume, as created by a snappy attack sound on the heads combined with the punch and brightness provided by the long aluminum shells. (The 12" and 15" sizes were especially nice in this context.) However, I found it somewhat difficult to get a distinctly different range of pitches from the various drums. Shell *depth* tends to add tone, body, roundness, and other modifying factors to the sound of a drum, but doesn't really affect the fundamental pitch very much. That is more a result of *diameter*. Since all of the *Quarter Toms* are of the same diameter, and since *any* drum that is 6" in diameter is going to be in the upper ranges to begin with, I have to disagree with some of Pearl's promotional claims regarding the "depth" of the longer *Quarter Toms*.

The problem with drums of this small a diameter is that tuning becomes very sensitive. A small head size means that even slight variations in tension have a proportionately greater effect on the overall tension of the head than they would on a



Photo by Scott G. Binstock

larger drum. Add to this the small number of tuning lugs, and the potential for uneven tensioning is pretty significant. This proved true on the *Quarter Toms*, where the 6" CS *Black Dot* heads lost tone very quickly when even one lug was the slightest bit looser than the others. This minimal tuning range did not allow for much "detuning" to get any sort of low-pitched sounds. When I tuned the 20" deep tom as low as I could (while still retaining head tone) and cranked each of the other drums up from there, I found that I could achieve an acceptable melodic range—but it was definitely in the upper registers. The aluminum shells, predictably, provided a somewhat metallic sound—not what I would describe as "warm"—yet were not particularly "ringy" in the way an unmuffled metal snare drum might be.

What the *Quarter Toms* have to offer is a quartet of special-effect drums: quick, sharp, loud, and interesting. You'll have to have confidence in your sticking accuracy—or plan to develop some—in order to play fast patterns on these small targets, but that challenge might be part of the fun of playing the *Quarter Toms*. The drums are sold individually or in sets, with list prices as follows: 12"—\$105; 15"—\$115; 18"—\$130; 20"—\$145; 12715" set with stand—\$320; 18720" set with stand—\$360; and all four drums with two stands—\$680.



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# Understanding Sound Systems: Part 4

■ by Spiros A. Psarris

In the previous installments of this series we've looked at most of a standard PA setup, up to and including the effects. This time, we'll examine the operation of the power amps, crossovers, and speaker stacks.

At the point we've reached in our system so far, we have an electrical signal, all mixed and ready to go. From here, it seems like all we need to do is send it to a speaker to convert it into sound. However, this isn't true; we still have to work on the signal a little before it will drive our speakers to produce music.

Most of us are familiar with the speakers in our home or car stereos. Most of these contain more than one "driver," or speaker cone; some have two types (woofers and tweeters), and others have midranges, too. This is done because the range of frequencies in music is too wide for only one type of cone to handle it effectively. PA systems usually work under this same principle; the speaker stacks usually contain separate drivers for bass, mids, and highs.

So before our PA speaker can produce music, the incoming signal must be split up according to its frequencies. Thus, the high frequencies must be sent to the tweeters, the middle frequencies to the midranges,

and the lower frequencies to the woofers. This operation is done by an electronic circuit called a "crossover."

There are two types of crossovers: "passive" and "active." Passive crossovers are what most stereo speakers have, and most people have never seen one because they're usually built into the speaker cabinets. PA systems can use either kind of crossover; they each have their good and bad points.

Passive crossovers don't require a separate power supply because the electronics used are "passive" (hence the name). The disadvantage to using a passive crossover is that this type of electronic circuit is not very accurate; therefore, the circuit may not be as precise in splitting up the frequencies as it's supposed to be. Passive crossovers do have a very strong advantage, however, which is that they can handle very large amounts of power. Therefore, if you only have one power amplifier, you can amplify your musical signal before it reaches the crossover. The crossover will then sort the high-power signal into its separate frequencies and send them directly to the appropriate speakers. *Figure 1* shows the use of a passive crossover.

For a beginning PA system, it's usually cheaper to buy speakers with passive crossovers built in (much like your home stereo speakers). This saves you money on the crossover (since you don't have to buy one separately), and on power amplifiers (since you only need one power amp with two channels: one for the monitors, one for the speakers). This setup gives you sound in "mono" instead of stereo, but stereo for a club gig is often an unnecessary luxury anyway.

Active crossovers are the opposite of passive, as you probably figured out. Professional sound engineers like them

because they can fine-tune the crossover to exact frequencies, and thus have better control over the sound produced by the speakers. However, active crossovers require a separate power supply (meaning that there's yet another thing to plug into the wall), and take up space on the rack. Most importantly, active crossovers contain delicate electronics that can *not* withstand high power levels. Thus, you have to split up the signal while it's still low-power, before it gets amplified. This means that for a mono setup, you now need at least two or three separate channels of power (not including the monitors), instead of just one. (For a stereo setup, you need twice as many.) It's nice to be able to fine-tune your frequency responses, but if you don't have several hundred dollars to spare on extra power amps, passive crossovers will do you just fine. *Figure 2* shows how several amplifiers are required if you want to use an active crossover.

A few words on power amps are necessary here. Power amplifiers are the most straightforward of all PA equipment; an electrical signal goes in one end, and a bigger version comes out the other side. PA setups are sometimes talked about in terms of how much power is used (usually in watts); all of this power is supplied by the power amplifiers. Most amps have two channels, which means that they can amplify two signals separately. Some of these can be "bridged," where the amp is set up to have only one channel, but with twice the usual power.

Speakers also have power ratings, but these refer to how much power the speakers can take without blowing themselves up. Ideally, your amps and speakers should have the same power ratings. Unfortunately, bands sometimes have to skimp on one or the other for financial reasons. So if your amps and

Figure 1:

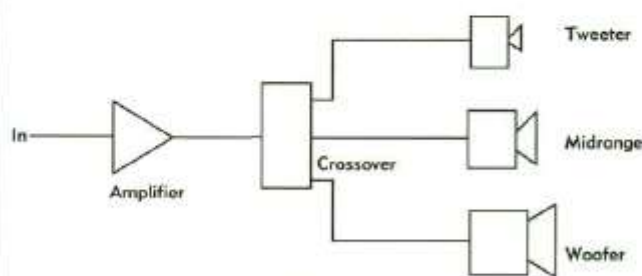
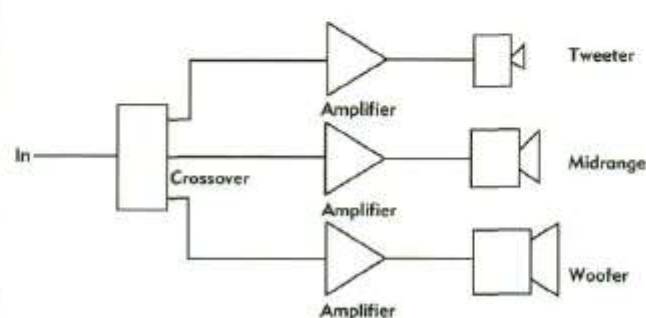


Figure 2:



speakers don't match, which one should have the higher power rating? Most people would think that it should be the speakers, but that may not be wise. If your amps can't put out enough power, you'll be tempted to turn them way up to compensate, and that's dangerous. Overdriven power amps go into a condition called "clipping," which can damage your speakers very easily, even if the overall power is at a level that your speakers can handle. Thus, you're safer if your amp has more power. (However, don't turn it up too loud, or your speakers will blow anyway from the power level.)

Now we come to the speakers themselves. Some PA systems are "two-way," others are "three-way." (More complex ones are rare.) Two-way systems use two types of speakers to produce music, while three-way systems use three types.

"Woofers" are large speakers designed to produce low, bass frequencies. They have to be large, because bass frequencies require that large amounts of air be moved. Cabinets for the woofers ("bass bins") are also very large, and if your band moves its own equipment you'll find out just how large and heavy they can be.

Midranges produce the middle frequencies in music. Two-way systems don't use mids; instead, they send these frequencies to the woofers and tweeters. This method is cheaper, but doesn't sound as good.

Tweeters produce the highest frequencies in music. PA systems use different types of tweeters; you might hear them referred to as "horns," since many PA tweeters have a horn-like cone built onto them. This is done because of the large volumes that the speakers have to produce; the horns make the music more directional, and thus louder.

Note that you don't necessarily have to have separate cabinets for the woofers, mids, and tweeters. Many systems are available, in two- or three-way varieties, that are built into one cabinet. These are cheaper to buy and are easier to lug around than separate cabinets. They'll even save you money on power amps and crossovers, if you buy one with a passive crossover built in. Plus, some of them sound pretty good!

Well, that's it. Over the past four months we've examined an entire PA system. If you look at it piece by piece, it's actually very simple to understand. Now you have no excuse not to dive in there and learn all about your band's PA, and how to use it to your advantage. Enjoy!



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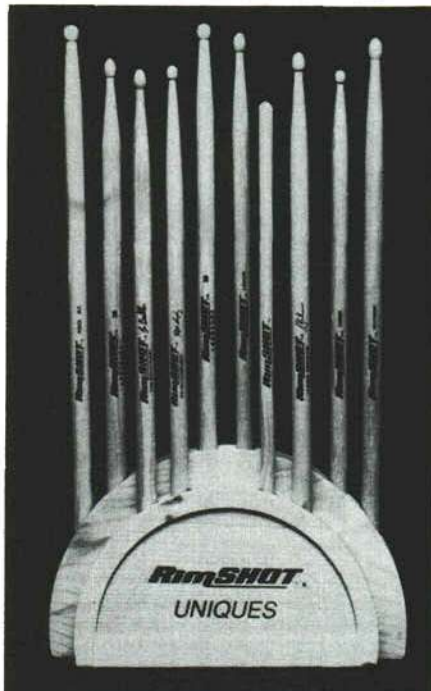
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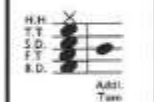
# Applying Cross Rhythms To The Drumset: Part 1

by Rod Morgenstein



Photo by Rick Malkin

## MUSIC KEY



An interesting and effective way to create excitement and tension in your drumming is through the use of cross rhythms. A cross rhythm is the simultaneous use of conflicting rhythmic patterns. Let's begin with the following measure in 4/4 time, which consists solely of 8th notes.



The 8th notes are grouped two to every quarter note, and it's very natural to feel these two-note pulses like this:



But what if we accent every third note instead, as follows:



Another way to illustrate this pattern is like this:



By accenting every third note instead of every second, we have created a cross rhythm.

In the following example, the accents are applied to the toms:



And in this example, a three-note pattern is established between the snare and bass, making for an interesting beat or fill:



The cross rhythm concept can be carried further by playing the pattern over two measures:



Another way to illustrate this pattern is as follows:



Note how the downbeat of measure two (in the last two examples) is not clearly defined. The three-note cross rhythm plays over the bar line, creating excitement and tension.

The following four examples apply the cross rhythm concept to the drumset:

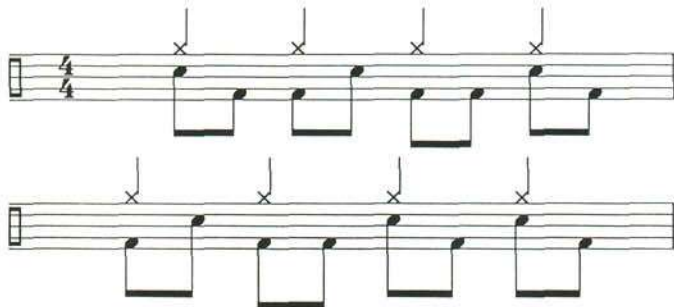
1. Accents are played on the snare and toms, unaccented notes are played on snare:



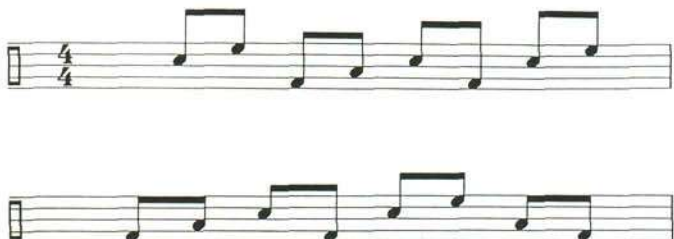
2. Accented notes are played on toms, unaccented notes are played on bass drum:



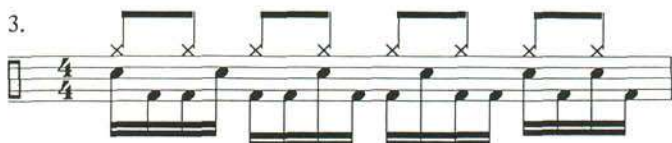
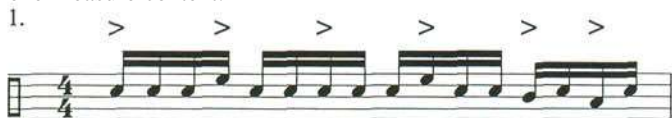
3. The three-note cross rhythm played as a beat with accented notes applied to snare, unaccented notes played on bass drum:



4. The three-note cross rhythm applied to snare, toms, and bass drum:



These four examples can also be illustrated as 16th notes in a one-measure context:



Next time we'll further explore cross rhythms and take a look at triplets. See you later.

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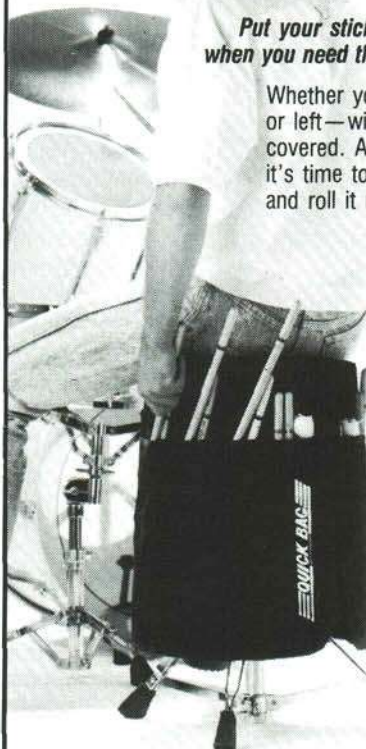
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# How Much Should You Practice?

■ by Roy Burns

I have read that some well-known drummers claim to have practiced 12 to 18 hours a day for years. This may be true in some cases, but I can't help feeling that in most instances it's an exaggeration—a form of bragging designed to impress younger players. However, in order to be fair, let's define "practicing."

If you put on the headphones and wail away with your favorite records, you are engaging in a form of *playing*. As the well-known teacher Henry Adler once put it, "If you are playing the same things during the day that you are playing at night on the job, you are *playing* as opposed to *practicing*."

Practicing usually should be a program designed to intentionally develop specific skills and abilities. I will also suggest that there should be some "fun time" in your practice routine. There should be time for some creative experimentation.

Let's assume that you have a balanced practice program that includes reading, technique, coordination, and working on different styles, including practicing with records. How much should you practice? This is difficult to answer.

Consider your schedule. If you are going to high school or college, you will need some self-discipline to find practice time each day. If you are working at some sort of day job you will have to practice in the evening and/or on weekends. If you are playing in a group you will no doubt have to allow time for group rehearsals as well as personal practicing.

The rule that I always used is a simple one: When you are playing in a group, practice less, and devote most of your energy to playing. When you are not playing, practice a lot. Each person has to find a balance depending upon his or her own energy level and daily commitments.

If you are serious, an hour a day is the minimum. Two to three hours is better when you can manage it. If you are

practicing four or more hours, there are some things you should consider. First, you must get a proper amount of rest. You must eat properly. You must get some exercise other than drumming. (Walking, riding a bicycle, swimming, and jogging are all good.) If you do not take care of yourself, you just might burn out after months of extensive practicing.

I recently heard of a young man who dropped out of school at the age of 14 so that he could practice the drums more hours. I really feel that this is not a good idea. You'll need an education if you become a successful drummer. You must be able to read a contract and talk intelligently to an attorney or accountant. In fact, you will need an education just to be able to manage your life—whether or not you become a successful drummer.

Consistent practice over a long period of time yields the best results. Day-to-day intelligent use of your practice time is the key. Practice hard if you must, but practice *smart*. Make sure that you are learning and progressing. If you feel stuck, seek out a good teacher. If you feel that you are not learning and improving with a particular teacher, find another one. Keep trying until you find a teacher who you feel is really helping you.

Avoid strange or weird methods of practicing. For example, do not practice with metal drumsticks. They won't help you. In fact, if you are not careful you can end up with a bone bruise that can take six months to heal.

Don't practice on a pillow. This is a myth that just won't die. It won't hurt you, but it won't help much either. Only drummers think they can practice on something other than their instrument and get good results. Practice on a pad, a snare drum, or the drumset.

Warming up by playing on your knee is something all drummers seem to do. I guess a bruised knee is the only danger here. A practice pad would be better.

If you feel pain when practicing, stop! If it hurts, you are doing something wrong or you have strained a muscle. (This is not an uncommon result of moving equipment

such as drum cases and amplifiers.) If pain persists, see a doctor. Don't take chances with your body.

If you are going to practice a lot of hours, build up to it over a period of time. Start with an hour, and gradually increase your practice time. Also, practice for an hour or so, then take a break. Have a snack or drink some fruit juice. Then practice some more. Taking regular breaks will help to keep you alert and refreshed.

Never practice when you feel ill. If you are sick, take care of yourself. Don't practice because you feel guilty; the practicing can wait.

Drummers should not smoke cigarettes. You need oxygen—not smoke—in your lungs and bloodstream to keep your energy and endurance up to a high level. If you don't smoke, don't start. It is an unrewarding habit that robs you of energy, and it is extremely tough to break once you have started.

Take a lesson from a professional drummer who might be in your town for only a few days. This is a good way to pick up new ideas for making your practicing more rewarding.

Spend a certain amount of time on producing a musical sound. Practice at different volume levels, from very soft to very loud. Experiment with different sounds by using mallets, brushes, or sticks of various sizes and shapes.

Above all, don't become a "practice junky." By that I mean that practicing is not an excuse to be late or to avoid doing your homework. Practicing should never be an excuse for being irresponsible. Get to work, school, or rehearsals on time. Practicing should never be a way out of keeping commitments. Arrange your day so that you can practice and still take care of your responsibilities.

There is an old expression that says, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy!" So, practice as much as you need to, but save some time to have some fun as well.

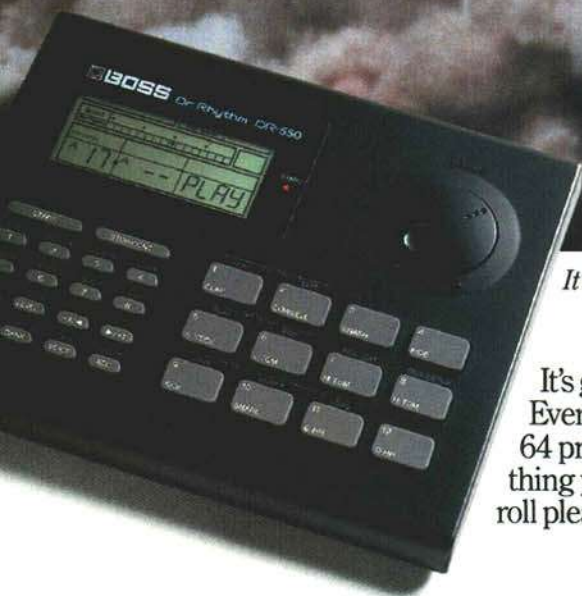
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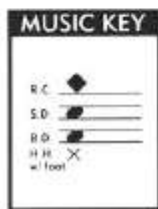
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# Hitting Hard: Part 1

■ by Kenny Aronoff



I've always been an aggressive drummer. It isn't something I *try* to do, it just comes naturally; it's part of my personality. When I was learning to play the drums as a kid, rock 'n' roll music was a big part of my life. I was naturally drawn to the energy and excitement of it, which undoubtedly affected the way I developed as a young drummer.

Now, many years later, I realize that the energy and emotion I put into playing the drums today has a lot to do with the music I'm playing and the musicians I'm playing with. I get excited when I play music. Something takes over inside of me that makes me attack the drums.

I became aware of how important it was to be in control of hitting the drums hard and playing the drums with power when I went into the studio for the first time with John Cougar Mellencamp. The engineer and the producer wanted me to not only hit the drums hard, but hit them hard *consistently*. At that point I wasn't laying down the rock solid foundation that was necessary for John's music.

That experience made me realize I needed to practice, and to develop what I thought were some weak points in my playing. I tried to strengthen these weaknesses by doing the following: 1. Learning to hit all the drums with a lot more power and with more consistency. That meant creating evenness between my hands and feet, while playing hard. 2. Hitting the drums hard and keeping solid time. I found that the harder I hit the drums, the easier it was to lose control of the time. When I hit the drums hard, I would throw my body into the drums, which made it easier to lose control. As I hit the drums less hard, I could sit back more and watch my hands and feet play and have more control. 3. Making every beat and every creative fill groove or feel good, while playing with a lot of power.

I set up a practice routine to help develop these techniques. The first thing I tried to focus on was the way I was hitting the drums. I noticed that my feet and hands were inconsistent. They weren't all playing with the same power together, or individually. Sometimes I'd hit hard, sometimes I'd hit soft, sometimes I'd hit medium—it was constantly changing. After observing my feet, I realized that I played my hi-hat foot much lighter than my bass drum foot, which contributed to my being unbalanced. This was one of the things that was messing up my time. I realized you could only play as well as your weakest limb.

I started working on my feet first, by practicing simple grooves—my right hand playing on the ride cymbal, my left foot playing quarter notes with my hi-hat, my left hand playing 2 and 4 on the snare drum, and my right foot on the bass drum. I tried to use all four limbs in a similar way.

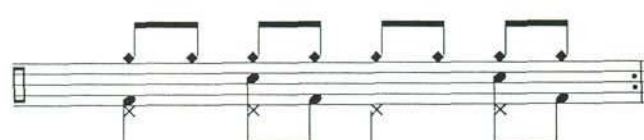
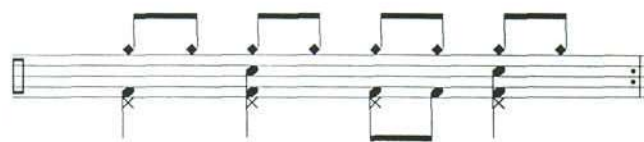
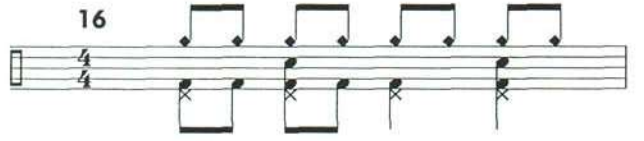
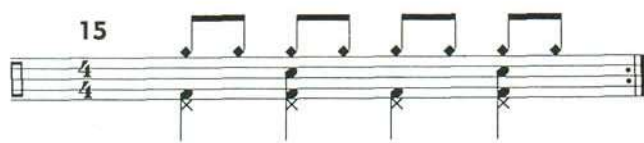
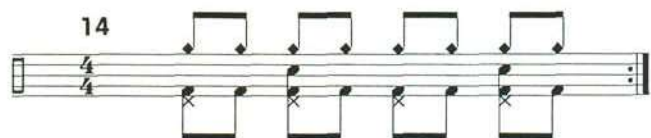
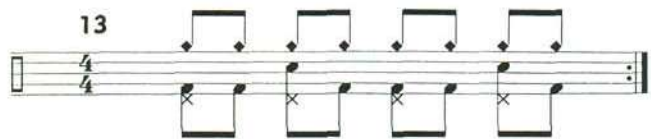
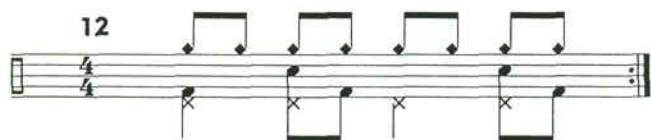
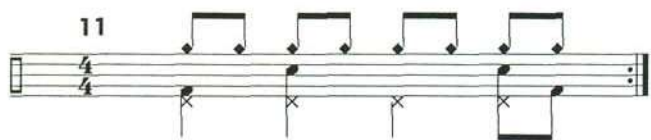
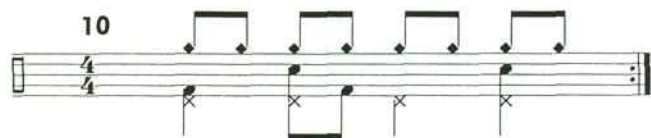
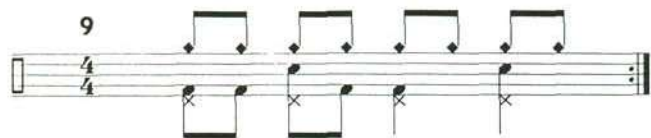
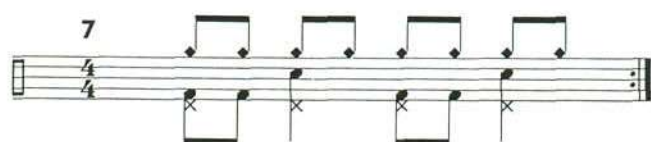
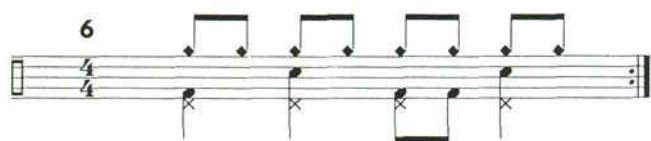
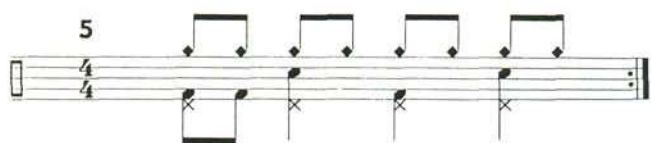
Because I was trying to change my entire approach to playing the drums, I practiced playing some real basic beats. It was like trying to change a golf swing that you'd been using your entire life, and then trying to make the new one work. Instead of playing with my heels down on the bass drum and hi-hat pedals, I started pumping my legs more, keeping the balls of my feet on the pedals. As I went up with my legs, my heels would raise, and as I came down with my legs, my heels would slam down on the pedals, forcing the bass drum beater into the head and closing the hi-hat real tight. I was trying to use my full range of motion to get more power.

I should mention at this point that when I hit the bass drum, I try to hold the beater against the bass drum head every time. That was something I hadn't been consistent about in the studio, and the engineer and the producer didn't dig that at all. I had to find the correct way to tune the bass drum so that I could hold the beater against the head when I hit it, and still get a good sound. I found that if you tune your drumhead too tight, you won't be able to hold the beater against the head, and you'll get a flapping sound. This flapping sound comes from the beater flapping on the bass drum head more than one time as you're trying to hold the beater against it. So I learned to get good at controlling the beater by playing on a bass drum head that was tuned very tight, making it that much more difficult to control. I practiced lots of basic rock beats to try to develop this new style of pumping my legs and playing hard. I also worked with Ted Reed's book, *Syncopation*, pages 37 through 44.

Here are some simple exercises to help you develop your power on all four limbs. Concentrate on your feet by pumping your legs as you play your bass drum and your hi-hat pedals. These exercises are very basic, but they're designed to develop the way you hit the bass drum and hi-hat with your feet. Play each exercise at a comfortable tempo, and if you have a drum machine or a metronome, use it to keep time. Play each beat over and over again until you can play it with power, in time, and in the pocket, before moving on to the next beat. Concentrate on making sure your feet and hands land perfectly together when they're supposed to. Once you can play all 17 exercises correctly, play them in a sequence without stopping. Play each exercise two times, and then move on to the next exercise, playing through all 17 of them.



Photo by Rick Malkin



Now go back and play all 17 exercises again with this cymbal pattern:

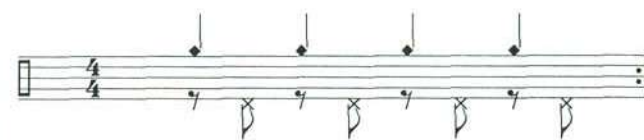


Once again, focus on playing each exercise with power, in time, and in the pocket, before moving on to the next one. Make all your movements graceful, but powerful. Once you can play all 17 exercises correctly, play them in a sequence without stopping.

Now play all 17 exercises again with the following cymbal pattern. Learn them individually and then play them in a sequence.



Finally, play all 17 exercises again with this cymbal pattern. In this pattern the hi-hat has moved from being on the beat to the off beats (the "&'s" of 1, 2, 3, and 4). As before, learn the exercises individually and then play them in a sequence.



In my next article, I'll give you more exercises to develop your power and strength on the drums. For now, continue to focus on your feet, and we'll talk more about your hands next time.





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# John Wackerman: No Boundaries

• by Robyn Flans

It was after a short gig with Maynard Ferguson that John Wackerman became a man with a mission. It was time to create an identity unique to himself. That's a lot to ask with the multitude of musicians playing today—not to mention having grown up in a household where a certain standard is set by brothers like Chad and Bob Wackerman—plus their music teacher dad, Charles, and younger brother Brooks, who is also a drummer.

John had started piano at age four, but didn't care too much for the instrument. At age five he began taking vibes lessons with Ruth Ritchie. When he was seven, the New Mouseketeers needed a band to back them at Disneyland. "All of us—Chad, Bob, and I—backed up the New Mouseketeers. Chad'll kill me for telling this, but everybody had to wear Mickey Mouse ears—even my dad, who was conducting us," John laughs. "My vibes teacher was great. I could read okay, but she made me learn the whole hour-long show in two weeks. There were something like 2,000 bars."

At age eleven, John began taking lessons from Charlie Shoemake—a bebop vibist who promoted his steady diet of jazz. "He influenced me tons," says John. "If you took from Charlie, you had to really practice. You had to put in four hours a day or forget it. I actually got real narrow-minded because I was only listening to Charlie Parker and that sort of music."

When Chad left their dad's junior-high band, they needed a drummer, which is how John began playing drums. Shortly thereafter, he began taking classical snare drum lessons from Murray Spivak, continuing for three or four years.

"Right around that time," explains John, "Chad got with Zappa, and that influence hit me pretty strong. I had never experienced anything like that, so I used to hang out at the rehearsals. It was a whole new avenue that had opened up. And when Chad went to Zappa, Bill Watrous needed a drummer. I kind of slid



Photo by Meridith Day

my way in there because Bill liked Chad's playing a lot, and playing like Chad was real easy for me because I had heard it all my life.

"What I got out of playing with Bill Watrous was fast tempos. Watrous is a bebop kind of guy, who would count off tempos that were insanely fast and go for 20 minutes. And he wants the drummer to play every note. The only way you can practice that stuff is at home with the metronome, but when it comes down to the gig, you just have to go *do* it. But that's good, because it prepares you for endurance."

To complicate matters further, John then began taking marimba lessons from Earl Hatch. As he says, "By then I was really unfocused and confused. I was taking drums from Chuck Flores, vibes from Charlie Shoemake, and marimba from Earl—and there are just not that many hours in the day. At the same time, I was still trying to be a teenager."

"Right in the middle of that, my brother Bob called and said that the drummer in Maynard Ferguson's band had quit, so why didn't I go out and tour with them? He got me on the band, and that was the first time I thought maybe I would start to take drums a little more seriously. The hard part about Maynard was that there was no audition or rehearsal; the first gig was it—sink or swim. But I learned that the main job in a band like Maynard's is to keep everybody in time and be real dependable. A lot of times you have to do fills that everybody

will always be able to come in on. You have to set everybody up, as opposed to taking it out. Maynard is an amazing showman, which was a new aspect I wasn't used to at all. I actually didn't stay with him that long, though, which ticked Bob off a little. I came back to town, still trying to figure out what I wanted to do. By that point, I started to get away from mallets. It finally hit me that what I was doing had been done in 1943 by Miles Davis and all those guys. At that point, I figured that vibes was kind of an outdated sound that not many people were doing, so that's when I started getting into drums more.

"Just to let you know where I was at, though, there's a funny story about when I played the Great American Music Hall with Maynard in 1985. Like I said, I was real narrow-minded. After the show, somebody came up and said, 'Robert Plant wants to see you,' and I had no idea who he was. So I went up to him and we talked for about 20 minutes. His manager was right there, he had two bodyguards, and there were tons of people around. I thought, 'Well, maybe he has had a couple of hits or something.' When the word got out, the big joke around town was that I had met Robert and didn't even know who he was."

When John left Ferguson, it was the major turning point for what has evolved since. "I knew I wanted to do something in my time period, which is *not* playing bebop," Wackerman explains. "I didn't like some of the fusion; a lot of it seemed

old, very '70s. I loved *Heavy Weather* by Weather Report, but a lot of people haven't taken it past that. I started getting into rock—doing things a little differently. I would look at drummers and think, 'We're the most physical guys. Why am I getting bored?' I realized it was because everybody has the same setup and everybody usually does the same pouty look and plays 'hoodala' fills: 'hoodala, hoodala, hoodala, *bot*'—stand up and bow.

"When I got off tour with Maynard, Vinnie Colaiuta and Chad were playing with Bunny Brunei. When neither of them was available, Chad would say to Bunny, 'Why don't you give John a call?' Every time he called I would be doing something, but finally we got together. Right about that time, I was starting to experiment with my drums. I started to do some weird stuff, and I finally came up with putting the toms up high. I had actually been experimenting with stuff like that before I went out with Maynard, but I never really had guts enough to do it in public, because everybody would laugh and say, 'Oh yeah, John's doing *that* again.' When Bunny called, I thought, 'I'm just going to do my own thing.' When we had the first rehearsal, I showed up and put my toms high. Bunny walked in and went, 'Okay.' But when we played, he saw that I could play fluently on it. He loved it, and we've been playing together ever since.

"Bunny had worked with a lot of really great drummers—Vinnie, Tony Williams, David Garibaldi, and Chad—so when I got with him, he knew a lot of drum beats that he wanted specifically. He knew enough about drums to talk in a drum kind of way, so a lot of the time I would do exactly what he said and build upon that. He would be as specific as saying, 'Do a hi-hat here, do a tom thing here, and do this kind of beat here.'"

When it came time for Brunei to do his album, it was just up John's new alley. As John describes it, "He wanted to do something real current—an all-electronic album with a lot of MIDI. When he first brought up the idea, we didn't know if it would fully work. Everybody's done it in dance music, but to do it in fusion music is really hard."

It was then that Wackerman met Ken Hada. (Or rather, that's when he *re-met* Ken Hada; they had had an inconsequential meeting while in high school



Photo by Meredith Day

**John and his aide-de-electronics. Ken Hada.**

marching band.) Hada was called because of his reputation for expertise in electronics.

Ken was an ambitious little kid. While he started on guitar in the fourth grade, he later graduated to the drums and took lessons from such drummers as Roy Burns, Roy McCurdy, Rick Latham, Chad Wackerman, Gregg Bissonette, David Garibaldi, and Murray Spivak. He got into electronics with the *Syndrums*. Right after high school, he went to computer school—where he got straight A's and secured a job even before he had graduated.

"Even before I met John," says Ken, "I was doing things like using a microphone to trigger and simultaneously record the drums. I was making *SDS7s* before they existed, just out of necessity. If there weren't certain things, I had to invent them, just like we do now. With electronics at this point, we have to stretch things to the limit. Equipment isn't up to where we would like it to be, although it's incredibly advanced.

"When I saw John, I thought, 'This is perfect. This guy plays vibes—which is a percussive instrument—and he plays drumset.' He's got his toms in the air, which alleviates the problem of where to put trigger pads. He can be playing the drums, horn lines, bass lines, a large man screaming—anything, just from a pad. He has much more dexterity than your average player because he's a vibes player."

"When I was taking from Chuck Flores," interjects John, "he'd have us read four lines. Back then it was, 'Thanks, Chuck. He's *torturing* us, Dad.' But now, when I'm playing and I have to hit a hold pedal or do a patch change, the independence is a must."

"It's gone way beyond independence," Ken proceeds. "On Kazumi Watanabe's *Kilowatt*, the problem we had all along was that they wanted to have John hit one pad and have a chord sound off. An *Octapad* can't even do chords; a *drumKAT* can only do a three-note chord. And they wanted some of the chords to have five or six notes. The way we got to do that was with a device called the *MIDI Mapper* by Axxess. It can do just about anything! You can tell it to play four notes, you can voice the chord in a piano way, a guitar way, or a totally original way, and just by hitting one note on an *Octapad* or a Simmons pad, you hear this great chord.

"On 'Good Night Machines,' John's doing drum fills, and at the same time, he's playing these chords. If you had your eyes closed, you'd swear it was a keyboard player playing along with him, because he doesn't put them in real pedestrian places; they're very syncopated. He also keeps up his drumming. When he drops a note to play a chord, sometimes he'll reach over with his left hand and hit the hi-hat to compensate. It's beyond learning a pattern and doing it; it's like improvisational coordination. On this



song, he's playing independent keyboard parts simultaneously with drum parts that *already* split his body into four different sections. So he's playing five different parts."

Following their work together on his own record, *Momentum*, Bunny Brunei also got John and Ken involved in Patrick Moraz's new album. "Working with Patrick Moraz was completely different from anybody else I have ever worked with," Wackerman says. "Patrick is real esoteric and talks to you in ways I wasn't used to. He doesn't talk in musical terms; he talks in terms of emotion. One tune was 17 1/2 minutes long. There were no rehearsals, no music, not even a click—and that was the first piece I did with him. But it was a real learning experience. At first I was trying to count bars, but it made me stagnant, so I just had to follow the mood changes. I finally thought about it like going through tunnels, as opposed to musical bars. When I'd hit another tunnel, it would be a different thing, yet it had to flow. Playing that way is beyond notes or technique, and we spent about ten hours doing that one song. Plus, my setup wasn't a basic drumset; it also involved a lot of machine percussion. Patrick also has the biggest keyboard setup this side of the world, so I was triggering a lot of his sounds that he likes."

Referring again to Watanabe's *Kilowatt*, Ken describes how incredibly machine-involved the drumming was. "I went in with the computer and I velocitized it. In other words, I would redefine how John was hitting the strikes," Ken explains. "Electronic pads aren't sensitive enough yet to really reproduce his inflections. So I would do the velocity—which is how hard he is hitting—of every single beat of the entire composition. Most of the time he'd be sitting right there with me, telling me what he meant, and then I'd have to tell the *computer* what he meant. I was sort of a translator—a drummer who knew how to talk to the computer. Then came placement of the beat. Machines auto-correct everything we kind of goof. So we play certain things this way and a little that way to mimic human feel. I'm concerned with velocities, dynamics, and pitches of instruments. When a machine hits harder, it's the same sound, only louder. When you hit a drum harder, it sounds louder, plus it rises in pitch. On certain songs, like 'Capri,' when John

went above a certain velocity there would be a rimshot on the drum, because he plays a lot of rimshots. And he almost always does a rimshot on the snare drum when he does accents, so we did that through the computer.

"We did another thing on the record that not a lot of people are doing," Ken continues, "which is to use nine or ten drum machines. An electronic ride cymbal sound has a little decay at the end when you hit it. If you hit it again real quick, it cuts off the decay from the first hit, so it sounds like a machine gun—which you've heard in dance music. Some people like that effect, but for what we're doing, we had to do something about it. We had four or five drum machines just dedicated to the ride cymbal, because in fusion, it's even quicker than in rock. John's hitting 32nd notes, and none of those are cutting each other off. We drove the engineer crazy."

"It's definitely a challenge," John smiles. "You should see my music! Bunny wrote one tune called 'No One,' for which David Garibaldi did the drum part, so it's kind of complex. Bunny walked in and smiled and said, 'You're going to play keyboards on that tune.' It's just 4/4, but it sounds like it's in 7. It's really hard to count. If you listen to the tune, it sounds backwards. Bunny wrote it that way, and it's clever. With my right hand, I hit the *drumKAT* pattern. Ken programmed the hold on it, so I don't have to do any pedal or anything, and it lasts the whole duration of the bar. While I hit that, my left hand plays the hi-hat, so I keep the drum pattern consistent. It gets really tricky on the fourth bar, because when Bunny wrote the tune, he wanted the keyboard part on 1 and then the "&" of 2, which is the upbeat. I have to match it up and figure out where it lands and always hit it. The hard part about this tune is that I'm the chord structure behind Kazumi's solo when we do it live. I'm playing all this stuff, and I have to listen to Kazumi to try to build some kind of interesting solo and peak out and keep all the chords going. I change the rhythm of the chords sometimes too, to match where Kazumi is going and what Bunny's playing on the bass.

Hada says the arsenal of equipment used on Watanabe's tours includes the *drumKAT*, which acts as the controller. "It's just like the *Octapad*," he says, "but it's a little more detailed in that if you hit

the pad and you're playing a chord with our *Mapper*, it can hold a note for a certain length, which no other unit can do right now. That controls *EPS-Is*, and we do stuff with the *Prophets*. On Patrick Moraz's album, we used Chad's Akai and Dynacords. We worked with Yamaha FM synthesis, the *Mapper*—which is the master brain of everything—and tons of pads."

"Playing pads is definitely completely different," Wackerman says. "Incorporating them with the set is one of the hardest things to do. I still haven't mastered that. When I'm playing live and I hit the snare, I really lay in. When I go to a pad, I only have a certain amount of dynamic range. So it's like going from a huge Bonham backbeat to a keyboard part that sounds best if *played pianissimo*. In a live situation, it's really hard to have that much control of drastic changes. And when we're playing live, I'm also dealing with lights, fog, and excitement. The only way to work on that is playing. Murray Spivak's stuff helps a lot, and basic classical orchestral drumming also comes into play a lot. My main goal is to make it sound like a drummer actually playing to his full potential and a keyboard player playing to *his* full potential. If you close your eyes, it should sound like two separate guys. I also do bass lines in back of Bunny's solos, and that's a whole other approach, where I have to think like a bass player. And some of the notes have holds, so if I hit the wrong note, it becomes a *lot* of wrong notes. On the last tour, it got pretty stressful. It's hard to kick back and relax, because I have to know where the choruses and the verses are; I've always got to be counting, and I can't be wrong. If I'm wrong, everybody's looking at me."

It's hard to believe this same drummer does an abundance of sessions ranging from an all-acoustic bluegrass guitar player (Dennis Agagianian) to a MIDI session for a TV show called *Family Matters*. And when there's time, John and Ken are working on their *own* all-MIDI project. You can be sure the music this duo is creating isn't like anything you've heard before, for this team is definitely into breaking the rules and defining new boundaries—which really turn out to be no boundaries at all.





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# Portraits In Rhythm: Etude #23

• by Anthony J. Cirone



Etude #23 begins the second section of *Portraits In Rhythm*. The first section contained 22 solos for snare drum with an emphasis on phrasing, dynamics, interpretation, and technique. These four areas will continue to be important throughout the book; however, etudes #23 through #32 will also include classical musical forms.

Musical form gives a composition cohesiveness. The element of musical form contributes character to each work and distinguishes one piece from another. There is also a compositional device called "through composed," which means "no particular form." It, too, gives a composition a particular shape and character. The classical forms of music composition that were common during the 18th and 19th centuries have created a wealth of sonatas, symphonies, con-

certi, and solos that can still be heard in today's concert halls.

The second section of *Portraits In Rhythm* contains the following musical forms: ABA, Sonatina, Song and Trio, Rondo, Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, Gigue, Theme and Variations, and Sonata Allegro. Each one creates a different character, though thematic material and the use of variation is common throughout the pieces.

The classical composers used harmonic modulations when moving from one section to another. For example, if a work began in C major, a transition into the second section might be accomplished by modulating from C major to F major. Because this is not possible on the snare drum, I have used rhythmic instead of harmonic modulations; that is, instead of modulating from C major to G

major, I modulated from 4/4 time to 3/4 time. As I discuss each etude, I will point these out.

## Observations

1. The first theme (A) occurs over measures 1 through 6. Notice the shape of this theme: two measures *forte*, two measures *piano*, then two more measures *forte*. Be careful of the dotted 16th and 32nd rhythms. As I have warned before, whenever dotted rhythms occur with triplet rhythms, the dotted rhythms should be played very short so that they do not sound like triplets.

2. The second theme (B) begins at the double bar in measure 7. Notice the different time signature (2/4). As I mentioned above, it represents a change in key signature that might have taken place if the etude were written for a melodic instrument such as the violin or flute. The B theme is very different from the A theme: Rhythms are syncopated with heavy accents, which contrasts the flowing triplets in theme A. Notice the wedge accents. (They are played with more emphasis than normal accents.)

3. In line 6, measure 2, the 4/4 measure begins a short transition back to the A theme. The changing time signatures suggest a modulation back to the original time signature of 4/4.

4. Notice the coda in line 10. It represents closing music, and does not add to the form. Usually a coda consists of material that has been taken from the body of the work. Also, notice the *piu f* marking at this point. The word "piu" (Italian) means "more"; therefore, this marking means "more loud" and is interpreted as somewhere between *forte* and *fortissimo*.

## Interpretations

1. Play the *pianissimo* section in line 5 near the edge of the drum to obtain a delicate, as well as a soft, quality to the sound.

2. Once again, do not alternate flams in line 6. The exception to this may be in measure 3 of line 6, where a flam-tap sticking can be used.

3. The last line of the piece is written as a traditional classical ending. One hand may be used for the 8th, quarter, and half notes.

4. The final measure is a whole-note roll preceded by a flam. To be effective, I suggest playing all flams that are attached to rolls on the open side. Notice the accent is on the flam.

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A B A ♩ = 72

*f*

*p* *< f*

*ff*

*pp*

*mf*

*ff* *f*

*p*

*f*

Coda

*più f* *> p* *cresc.* - - - - -

*ff* *sfz*

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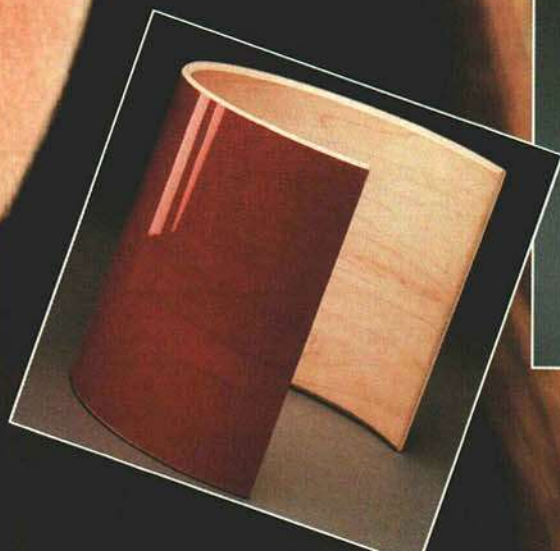
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## Rhythmic Rudimental Progressions: Part 4: Single Paradiddles

by Joe Morello

Transcribed by Keith Necessary



Photo by Rick Mattinalv

The purpose of the following exercise is to be able to play single paradiddles using 8th notes, 8th-note triplets, 16th notes, 16th-note triplets, and 32nd notes. You'll probably find it a little tricky at first trying to hear the accented patterns over the quarter note.

Play this exercise with and without accents. Be patient and play relaxed. Don't raise the metronome speed if you feel any sort of tension. Also, experiment with dynamic levels. Play everything from very soft (*ppp*) to very loud (*fff*).

Try playing this exercise with brushes; playing doubles with

brushes is a great exercise for wrists and fingers. Also, try this exercise at the drumset. Play the unaccented notes on the snare drum and the accented notes on the toms or cymbal/bass drum combination, while playing four on the hi-hat with your left foot. Remember to be musical and use your imagination.

*If you have any questions about this exercise, you can contact Joe through Modern Drummer.*

4  
4

R L R R L R L L etc.

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L

R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L etc.

6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6 6

R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L

R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L etc.

R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L R L R R L R L L





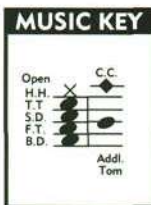


## John Bonham: "The Ocean"

■ Transcribed by William F. Miller

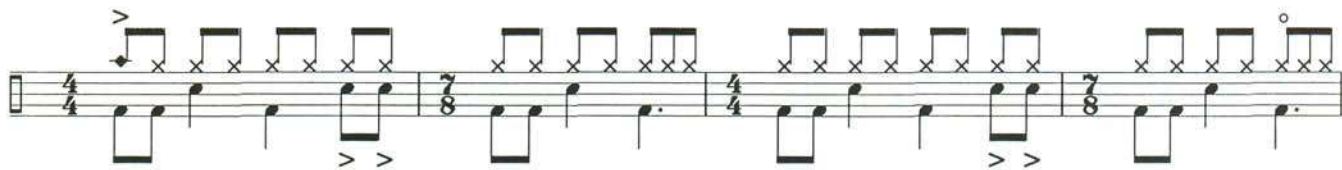
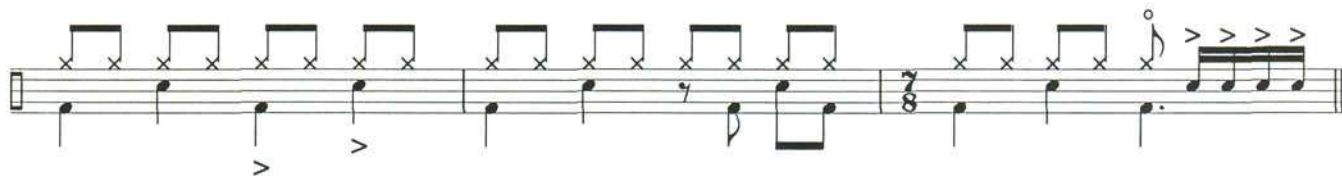
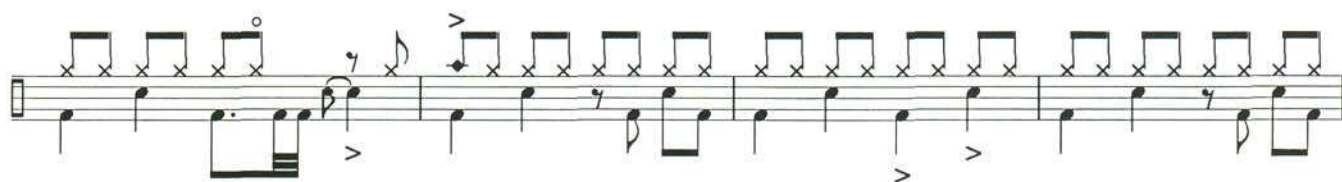
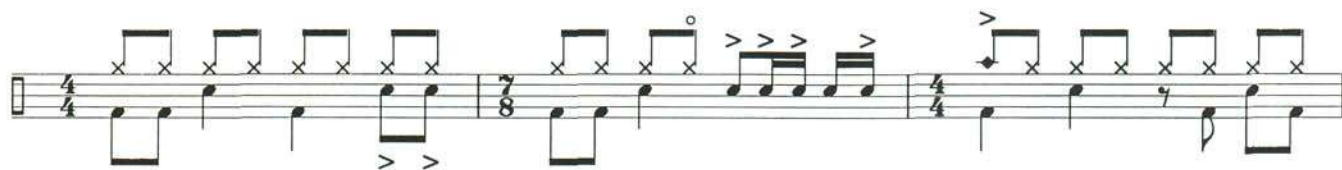
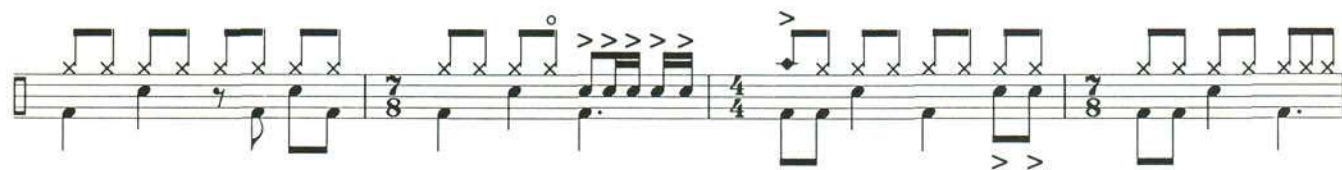
It's hard to believe that it's been ten years since John Bonham passed away. In September of 1980, one of rock's greatest musicians left us. We're commemorating that anniversary by featuring John in this month's *Rock Charts*, as well as in *Photo Gallery*. (See page 136.)

Bonzo's performance on "The Ocean" (from *Houses Of The Holy*, Atlantic SD-19130) is a classic. On this song he demonstrates a lot of the characteristic Bonham traits: Powerful yet simple playing, no problem handling the odd meters, great bass drum technique, and that unmistakable feel—it's all here.



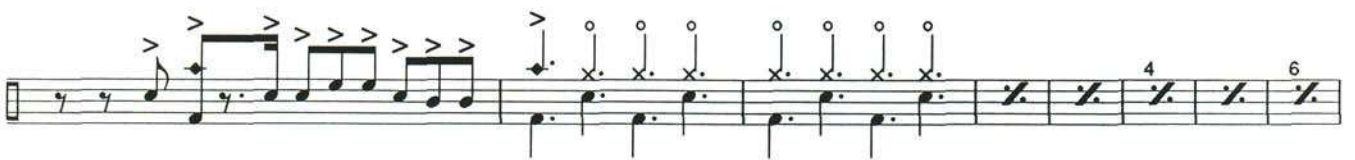
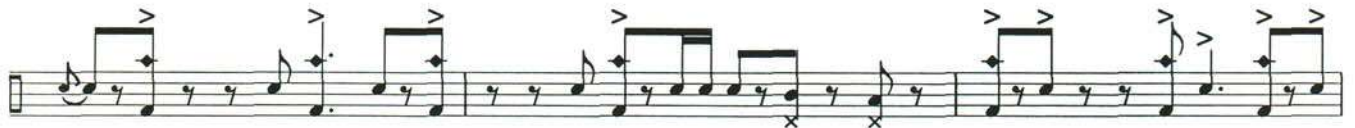
♩ = 88

The musical notation for the drum part of "The Ocean" is spread across four staves. The first staff begins with a tempo marking of ♩ = 88. The notation uses various time signatures: 4/4, 7/8, and 3/4. The drum patterns are represented by 'x' marks on the staff lines, indicating specific drum hits. The notation includes various rhythmic values such as eighth, quarter, and half notes, as well as rests. The second staff continues the pattern with more complex rhythms. The third staff shows a change in time signature to 3/4. The fourth staff concludes the pattern with a final flourish.





The musical score consists of ten staves of notation. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, rests, and dynamic markings such as accents (>) and breath marks (circles). The time signatures change throughout the piece, including 7/8, 4/4, and 12/8. The score is written in a single system with multiple staves.





# Ginger Baker: Disraeli Gears

• by Robert Santelli



Although Cream lasted only three years (1966-1968), that short span of time was nonetheless long enough for Ginger Baker to redefine rock drumming. Working behind a double-bass drumkit, Baker elevated the rock drum solo to a new plane and demonstrated that there was an alternative to groove-oriented drumming.

But Baker was more than just an accomplished soloist. Because Cream was a trio, the responsibility to push the band's bottom end was Baker's. Jack Bruce was far from a typical bass player. He often seemed more interested in forging a bass style that was as innovative as Baker's drumming and demanded almost as much space as Eric Clapton's lead guitar.

This meant that Baker was frequently forced to keep Cream's rhythmic foundation intact by himself—and at the same time fill the gaps left by Bruce's wandering bass. Baker achieved this with scintillating fills that went a long way toward proving the validity of the rock trio—an adventurous idea in 1966.

Although Fresh Cream, the trio's first album, included some truly innovative studio performances by all three members of the band, its follow-up, *Disraeli Gears*, contained a broader reach of songs and perhaps posed more of a challenge to Cream.

*Fresh Cream had startled the rock world in early 1967 with its amazing expansion of the blues format. The pressure was on Cream to continue its rich experimentation with blues-flavored sounds, while producing an album that would also be a bit more commercially accessible than its predecessor.*

*Released later that year, Disraeli Gears was more about rock than blues, and brought Cream the success in America that it deserved. "Sunshine Of Your Love," Cream's biggest single and the flagship track on Disraeli Gears, shot to the top of the charts in 1968. Only one other Cream song, "White Room," came close to matching the success of "Sunshine" before the band dissolved in 1968.*

**RS:** Do you remember how you, Jack Bruce, and Eric Clapton felt about making *Disraeli Gears* at the time?

**GB:** We recorded *Disraeli Gears* in New York. It was sort of a swiftly arranged thing. *Fresh Cream* had come out, and we all knew it was a real good album. It got into the charts at about #99 or something, but it was there. As far as I recall it was decided then to go to New York and record another album at Atlantic Studios.

We went into the studio, but we didn't have a lot of stuff ready. A lot of Atlantic people were there in the studio: Ahmet Ertegun, Tom Dowd, Arif Mardin, and this other person, Felix Pappalardi. Ahmet asked us to play something, so we did "Strange Brew," which was, in fact, an old blues number that Eric did. We were listening to it back and realized the recording wasn't stupendous. But Felix said he'd like to take the tape of the song home with him, take the vocal off it, and write a song on top of it. The next day he came back with the song and got Eric to sing it—which Jack wasn't too pleased about—and it became "Strange Brew."

**RS:** You said Cream didn't have much material worked up prior to going into the studio to record *Disraeli Gears*. Did you write the rest of the songs for the album in the studio?

**GB:** No, Jack already had some numbers. He would always turn up at rehearsals with 14 or so numbers. Actually, I wanted it to be an album that was written in the studio, because the things that were written like that were usually really incredible.

**RS:** How did "Sunshine Of Your Love" wind up on the album?

**GB:** Well, Jack had brought a riff along that we'd been playing. It wasn't really happening, though. We tried it out in a few

rehearsals. Jack brought it up again and I slugged it out. Then Eric came up with the mid-section. But I didn't get a [publishing] part of the song. The other three did: Jack, Eric, and Pete Brown, who was a lyricist. I had known Pete Brown for two years before I had met Jack. I went to Pete and said, "Can you come and write some words with us?" He said yeah, and the next thing that happened was that "Sunshine Of Your Love" came out as having been written by Bruce and Brown. Well, I had actually helped write the song. I saw this beginning to happen at the studio when we were recording the album. I was really having difficulty controlling my temper. I was spending a lot of time in the bar underneath the studio.

**RS:** At the time you recorded *Disraeli Gears*, was the relationship between you, Jack, and Eric still good? Or had it already begun to sour?

**GB:** For me, it was sour three months from the time we began the group. If *Fresh Cream* hadn't done what it did, I don't think I would have lasted with Cream for another couple of months.

**RS:** Did you have musical differences, or personal differences, or a combination of the two?

**GB:** The problems were more along the business side of things. For the first year of Cream I did all the office work—setting up gigs, demanding more money for the band, things like that. We did some lunatic things. Once we booked nine gigs in one week. I was totally involved in the band's business operations. And I could see that the publishing situation was heavily loaded and I wasn't getting any of it. It's still like that today. Jack gets the lion's share of Cream's publishing money. I know how much I get. And I know he's getting a whole lot more than me. Take "White Room," for example, even though that song wasn't on *Disraeli Gears*. The reason why "White Room" started in 5/4 was my idea. Jack wrote it in 4/4. I said, "Why don't we play it in 5?" But I never got any credit for it. He still doesn't give me any credit for it. [laughs]

**RS:** Weren't these things worked out when Cream first formed?

**GB:** No. I was running Graham Bond's band [the Graham Bond Organization] before Cream. I finally reached a point where I said, "Why should I run Graham's band?" Graham was drifting away, drug-wise. I had a problem too, but I was trying to get straight. So I thought, "Why don't I get my own band? I might as well work for

myself." I went to see Eric and told him I was getting a band together. I asked him if he wanted to join, and he said yes straight away. We were talking about who to get to play bass, and Eric suggested Jack. Now, I had previously fired Jack from Graham's band. Graham had come to me about it, because Jack had been misbehaving on stage for months—driving everyone mad. I had nearly killed him one night. But I went 'round to his house anyway and told him what me and Eric were doing, and he came aboard.

**RS:** Was *Disraeli Gears* recorded live in the studio?

**GB:** The guitar solos were overdubbed, of course. But the whole album took less than two weeks. We had two weeks in New York to do the album, and we did it. Do you know how long it takes some people to do an album? Months! *Fresh Cream* was done in something like eight days. *Disraeli Gears* took two weeks. *Wheels Of Fire* took less than two weeks—the same for *Goodbye Cream*. That might have been done in a week, come to think of it.

**RS:** What are your favorite tracks on *Disraeli Gears*?

**GB:** I think "Sunshine" was the best song on that album.

**RS:** From a drummer's point of view?

**GB:** Yes, I think so. At least you can hear the drums on that song.

**RS:** Were you surprised with the success of the song on AM radio? After all, it became a big hit for Cream.

**GB:** No, I don't think so. I found that backwards beat, and the song was written around that in the studio. It was a *different-sounding* song. I hate sameness.

**RS:** You mentioned that you can hear the drums on that song. But you can barely hear them on a number of other songs on *Disraeli Gears*. They seemed buried in the back of the mix.

**GB:** They are. You see, I was downstairs in the bar when they were doing the mixing for the album. The mix for that record was done by Felix Pappalardi, and he aimed the whole thing at Clapton's guitar.

**RS:** And Jack's bass.

**GB:** Of course. I mean, this was also happening onstage. Friends of mine would tell me that the only time they heard me play during a gig was during a drum solo. This was actual fact, and it's why Cream didn't last very long.

**RS:** You wrote one song that was included on the record: "Blue Condition." How did that song come about?

**GB:** It reflects how I was feeling at the time. I think Ringo had sung something with the Beatles, and somebody—not me—got the idea that I should sing a song on *Disraeli Gears*.

**RS:** Did you play Ludwig drums in the studio when you recorded *Disraeli Gears*?

**GB:** Yeah. I got a deal with Ludwig as soon as Cream happened. I had always wanted to play Ludwig anyway. For six years before that, I used a kit that I made myself out of acrylic sheets. I bent the shells over the gas stove. You needed heat to bend them.

[laughs] They were good drums. I played them when I was with Graham Bond.

**RS:** Didn't the Ludwig set you played have some custom drums?

**GB:** I had Ludwig cut the shells down on the bass drums. One went from a 14" shell to an 11" shell, and the other from a 22" to a 20". That was how Moonie [Who drummer Keith Moon] got his double-bass drumkit before me. I was having this work done on my kit, and I told him about it. And he got his Premier kit first, by a couple of weeks.

**RS:** You had already developed a reputation as a drum soloist by the time you were recording *Disraeli Gears*. Yet there are no real solos on the album. Why is that?

**GB:** Because it wasn't a drum solo record. It didn't call for it.

**RS:** One of my favorite songs on *Disraeli Gears* is "Dance The Night Away." I always admired your cymbal work on that tune.

**GB:** Yes, well, I always had good cymbals. I've been using Ludwig drums since 1966. Since that time I've only owned a total of four kits, because Ludwig kits last. The same is true with Zildjian cymbals. I still have the ride cymbal that I used on the *Disraeli Gears* album—and the hi-hats, too. Now Zildjian has a lot more sound variety in their cymbals, which is even better. I think if *Disraeli Gears* were recorded today, it would sound three times as good.

**RS:** What drummers moved you in 1967? Did any particular players influence the way you were playing at the time?

**GB:** I never really listened to just one drummer, especially to improve my playing.

But, you see, I had a pair of drumsticks long before I had drums. I didn't have any money. To think of a luxury like that in my house wasn't something you did. Some of the first records I got into were records by Bird with Max Roach. This was when I was 15 years old. I wasn't listening to anyone when we were making Cream records.

**RS:** Not Keith Moon or Ringo or...

**GB:** Oh man, are you kidding? [laughs] I mean, is that a serious question or what?

**RS:** What about John Bonham?

**GB:** I don't think Bonham was around at that time. I wasn't a very big Zeppelin fan back then, although I must say they did some interesting things later on. Some of it I still can't handle listening to. But they did do a couple of real classic tracks. But what I was doing behind the drumkit nobody was doing then, and nobody is doing it now. I had my own style the first time I sat behind a drumkit. I remember going to a party once when I was a kid. I sat behind a kit for the first time, and I just knew what to do because I'd been watching drummers play for years. I hit the ride cymbal, and

bang! We were off. The trumpet player turned around and said, "We got a drummer!" But you mentioned Moonie. He was a big fan of mine. He was a real nice kid from northwest London—a very funny bloke. He was a lot younger.

**RS:** I think you had a significant impact on his drum style. But there is a school of thought in some rock circles that criticizes your style as being too busy.

**GB:** That's Clapton's opinion, I think—even today. I know what I do, and the people know what I do. That's what it's all about—to me, anyway. I don't really care what others think. If it's happening and it's different, it's an adventure—a musical adventure.

**RS:** Did Clapton ever get on your case about what you were playing on *Disraeli Gears*?

**GB:** No. He used to get lost in it. So did Jack. They still do, sometimes. Lost in time, [laughs]

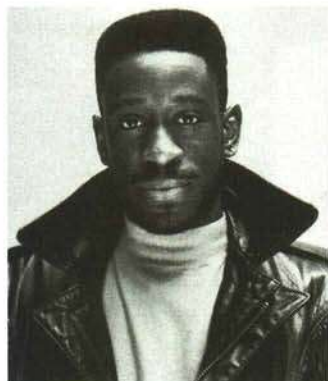
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# In The Practice Room

• by Gary Leone

Over the years as a drum teacher, I have been asked a very simple question numerous times, by quite a number of young drummers. At first I thought the question was silly, almost stupid. Later, I thought it was unanswerable. The question is: "How long does it take to get good?"

Now, we all know that the answer to that question is relative and depends on a number of variables and mitigating circumstances. What is the student's age? Is the student involved in a school music program? Physical ability, motor moves, and even environment can have an effect on the rate at which a student progresses. Yes, environment! Are the student's family and community musically inclined?

But eventually it all boils down to the one *most* important factor in becoming "good" on the drums (or any instrument). That factor is undoubtedly *motivation*—the incentive, the desire.

So many students enter the drum studio looking for that "magic wand." Lessons alone will not make you good, nor will mindless practice. I believe that in this motivational process there are three very important factors: attitude, goals, and concentration.

## Attitude

A good attitude will undoubtedly accelerate the improvement process, especially in regards to practicing and learning. Anyone who wants to learn a special skill *must* be dedicated to practice. Accept this and have a good, positive attitude towards practicing. Think of practicing not as something you have to do, but as your chance to improve yourself: "If I can spend another 30 minutes tonight practicing, I should be able to learn that new pattern for my lesson this Saturday."

## Goals

Often during lessons, my students will stop in the middle of a phrase, angry and disgusted, saying: "I made a mistake!" I always smile, because that is called "learning." The learning process is incredible! The average six- or seven-year old will try anything in front of an entire class of peers for the sake of learning. If only we could all maintain this through life. Relax. Be patient. Don't ever use that forbidden phrase, "I can't." Yes, you can! It takes a positive attitude.

Setting goals is essential in "getting good." One must have a path, a direction. When setting goals, always keep in mind several things:

First of all, goals must be realistic. To have a goal of playing like Neil Peart is great, but realize that it will take many hours of dedicated practice over a long period of time. Don't set a goal you can't achieve in a certain period of time.

Also, when setting your goals, remember that everyone learns at different rates and

## The Drum Pad

by Lorne Entress

*Every drummer is frustratingly aware of the limitations of the drum pad. No, it can't replace practicing on the real thing, but it can be a valuable tool, supplementing and expanding your work on the drumset. Here are some suggestions to help link your pad drumming to your set drumming.*

Begin by affirming that your work on the pad is time well spent. Bemoaning its limitations robs you of your creativity, enthusiasm, and perspicacity.

Think musically. I've often wondered about the mysterious, hypnotic power that lurks within a pad. After a few moments of playing, even the most dynamic drummer can be transformed into a non-thinking robot, mindlessly churning out megaparaiddles and triple ratamacues. Don't think "exercise." Strive for the same sense of awareness and inner pulse that you feel when you're playing your kit.

What drumset techniques are you currently working on? Condense them down to the pad. For instance, if you're



working on your rock grooves, use the pad as both snare and hi-hat. And don't be afraid to have both hands fall on the same beat. Drummers have a tendency to use the pad as if it were a single drum, freezing themselves into alternate sticking. Think of the pad as the drumset, not just the snare drum. Sure there are limitations, but when you sit down at your drums the next day, you'll be one step closer to mastering that current project.

Mimic the same arm motion you employ while at your set. It's common knowledge that power and precision result from strong wrist technique, but most drummers, especially in rock, combine that technique with a good deal of arm movement. How can you effectively recreate that big snare fill on the pad if your arms are in a locked position? Loosen up!

Use the pad as a creative tool. Let new ideas flow from your hands. Stretch out. Try new stickings and patterns and see if they translate well to the set. Sometimes they will, sometimes they won't. The pad is very useful when practicing stickings that require a lot of repetition, but its use doesn't have to end there. Even though a rubber pad doesn't deliver the aural rewards of a drumset, push yourself to play music. For example, start with a simple rhythmic motif and expand it into a drum pad solo.

Match the dynamic intensity of your set playing. It won't help you much to practice heavy rock grooves and fills at a comfortable medium volume if you have to reproduce them with twice the impact once you sit down behind your drums.

You're probably saying to yourself, "How profitable is all this if my feet can't get into the act?" It's true that the pad is pretty useless when it comes to hand-foot coordination. But this limitation doesn't cancel out all the benefits we receive when we make intelligent use of the drum pad. Just remember to give your footwork some undivided attention once you get to your drums.

levels. Know yourself and your learning capacity, and most of all, be patient. Don't make yourself feel like a failure because you can't attain certain goals overnight.

Goals must be of both short and long range. Set goals for this hour of practice, this week, and even over a period of years. One of the best things about taking lessons is that they help you to organize and regulate your practicing. Your teacher should have both short- and long-term expectations.

## Concentration

The scope of this subject is very broad, and we could spend this entire article discussing it. We don't have the room for such scrutiny here; however, we must constantly remind ourselves of its importance.

Mindless practice is a waste of time. Practice without focus will go nowhere. The ability to rid ourselves of daily conflicts and problems (and we all have them) and to concentrate on a particular skill is an accomplishment within itself. I would suggest reading *The Inner Game Of Tennis*

by James Galloway. It is an excellent book on this subject.

Attitude, goals, and concentration will all play a key role in the motivational process, but *desire* will lead them all. We are all inspired to play the best we can for one reason or another, that reason being our motivation. Here is my favorite true story about motivation:

Alcatraz Prison sits on a rock island in San Francisco Bay. Three men successfully escaped from this "inescapable" prison, and no trace of them has ever been found. Many people believe they did not make it, claiming that the bay was infested with sharks and that the men could never survive the treacherous swim in the frigid water. However, the producers of a TV show set out to disprove those theories. They interviewed a marine biologist, who quickly proved that there are no sharks in that part of the bay. Next, to prove that the men *could* have made the swim, they had a man attempt it. He wasn't an ordinary man, he was a triathlete who used to compete in Iron Man competitions, where he would run a marathon, swim a long distance, and finish with a cross-country bike trip. He

began the long swim in the freezing water. There were monitors on his heart, a rescue boat within feet, and emergency crews at every turn.

Of course, he made it. At the end of the swim, the interviewer asked him if he thought the three escapees could also have made it. Without hesitation, he replied, "Certainly." The reporter exclaimed, "How do you figure that? You are a trained athlete, used to this kind of physical exertion. But in the prison they wouldn't even let the prisoners exercise or take cold showers for fear that they may acclimate themselves to the cold water." The athlete replied, "Yes, but they had the most important thing in the world going for them: desire. The proper motivation can get the body to do amazing things by the release of adrenaline and endorphins—let alone what it can do for the spirit and the soul."

So you see, even the man who was best prepared for the situation admits that the man with the motivation and the desire has the best chance.

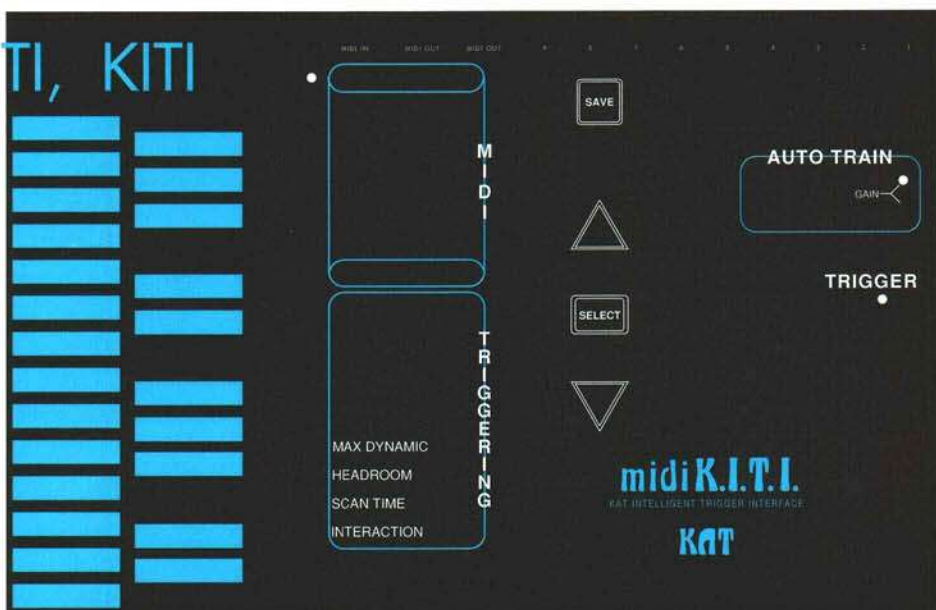
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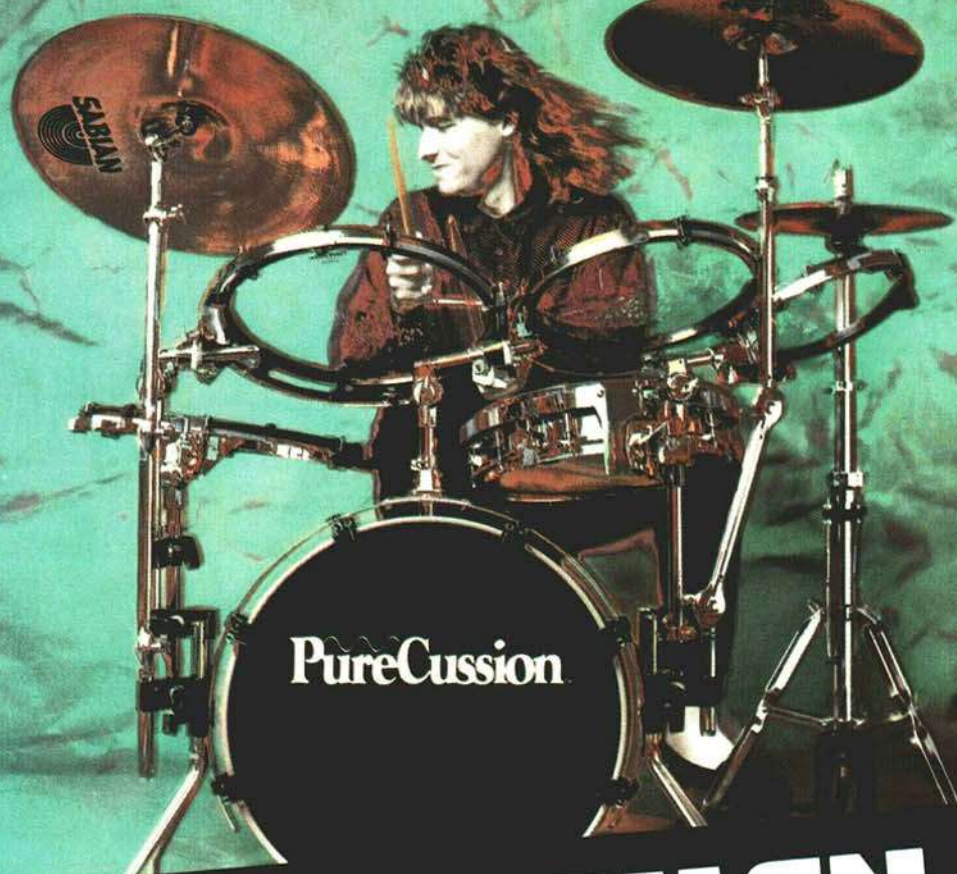
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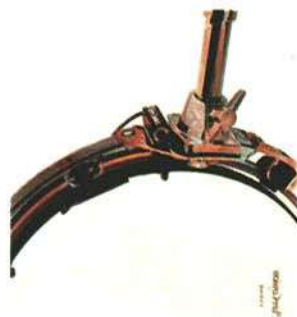
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## Avoiding False Triggering

In order to reduce double- and false-triggering of electronic drumpads that use Pearl-type tubular tom mounts, stuff the mounting tubes. Insert strips of cloth or toilet paper into the open ends of the tubular mount, pack them in with a drumstick, and tape the ends with a patch of duct tape. This cheap and quick method of reducing vibrations will let you increase the trigger sensitivity and prevent false triggering when mounting pads on cymbal or drum stands.

Scott Spellman  
Southfield MI

## Simplifying Rack Setups

I'd like to pass along a tip to those of you who have recently purchased a drum rack. When I first got mine, I had to adjust all the clamps on the rack to correspond with my hardware. If you have a big set like mine, you might have trouble remembering which piece of hardware goes into which clamp. Purchase several rolls of plastic tape in various colors. Put one piece of tape on the hardware, and one on the clamp. When setup time comes, all you have to do is match your hardware to its respective clamp. (If you have to break down any booms or stands, it's a good idea to color-match their components, too.) I believe this method will help reduce setup time.

Brady Spencer  
Memphis TN

## Keeping It Clean

If you're as careful as I am about keeping your drums, hardware, and cymbals clean, then you'll enjoy this tip. After you've spent hours cleaning the chrome on your drums and hardware, along with all the elbow grease it took to polish your cymbals, it seems senseless to see all the hard work go down the drain when it's time to set up or break down your kit for your next gig.

The answer is drummers' gloves. I don't play with them, but it is a good idea to wear them while you set up or break down your

kit. This will eliminate virtually all fingerprints and dirt that can easily accumulate on all the nice, shiny chrome you just spent hours cleaning. Since the gloves are thin, they are comfortable and easy to work with. They will also provide protection for those precious hands. It's just a matter of putting them on while handling your equipment; your hard work will last a long time. Drummers and roadies remember: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!

Edward Del Gaudio  
Staten Island NY

## Convertible Sizzle Cymbals

I have an idea for "convertible rivets" for use in a ride cymbal. Drill six or eight holes, evenly spaced, around the outer edge of an 18" to 22" ride cymbal. Into these holes, insert brass round-head spread-wing fasteners—the small devices most often used to fasten hole-punched papers together. They are available in any stationery or office-supply store. Insert each fastener into the hole, then spread the wings to keep it in place while providing the buzzing sound when the cymbal is to be used as a sizzle cymbal. The number of fasteners can be increased or decreased for a greater or lesser sizzle sound, or removed entirely if the cymbal is to be used as a standard ride.

Eliot Landsberg  
Plantation FL

Although sizzle cymbals are a little dated, the occasion to use one may come up in jazz, or even some rock music. If you don't have enough money to just go out and buy one for just a quick effect, there's an inexpensive way to make one. I purchased a cheap bead necklace with plastic beads about 1/4" in diameter. I put this around the bell of my ride cymbal, draped over the wing nut. It doesn't sound *exactly* like a sizzle cymbal, but it is pretty close. It also works well on a thin crash for a "trashy" effect. A small link chain or metal-bead bathtub plug chain will work in the same manner, producing a slightly different effect.

Greg Winsor  
Vestal NY

## Hole Protection

To protect the edge of a hole cut in the front bass drum head (and enhance the look of the drum), I've found that auto door edge trim works well. It's available in auto supply and discount stores. I recently purchased a

used set of Slingerland *Black Gold* drums, and the bass drum already had a 6" hole cut in the front head. The logo lettering was in gold, so I purchased some gold door edge trim and installed it around the edge of the hole. I warmed the trim before installing it so it would bend easily into a circular pattern. It works well and looks great!

Jim Murray  
Jonesboro AR

## Quick Dampeners For Quiet Practice

I have found that old bath or hand towels draped over drums and cymbals make great "dampeners." There are many times when I want to practice a basic beat using only the ride cymbal and snare. A towel thrown over each instrument reduces the sound considerably. (The ride is totally muffled.) The snare still returns enough bounce to practice rolls. This works well for the toms too; a towel over each drum still gives enough stick response. I am now able to play late at night (or all night) and not create too much "noise" for the neighbors.

Elizabeth Verhagen  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

## Attaching Snares

I was recently putting together a snare drum for a practice kit in my room, trying desperately to avoid using string, yarn, or shoelaces to attach the snares. (This method is a pet peeve of mine.) So I grabbed an old drumhead and cut it into strips about 1/2" wide, resembling the plastic strips with which most snares are now equipped. The durable strips from the used drumhead have never broken on me, and have saved me some money and a trip to the drumshop. Of course, this method will only work with snares that possess the necessary slots, but most snares have them.

Mark Konopka  
Cleveland Heights OH



*Note: The tips presented in Drumline are suggestions based on the personal experience of individual drummers, and are not necessarily endorsed or recommended by Modern Drummer magazine. Modern Drummer cannot guarantee that any problem will be solved by any Drumline suggestion, and cannot be responsible for any damage to equipment or personal injury resulting from the utilization of any such suggestion. Readers are encouraged to consider each suggestion carefully before attempting to utilize any Drumline tip.*





# Dealing With Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

• by Susan Alexander

"The joints of the human body are like finely-machined motorcycle engines," says Dr. Arlo Gordin, chiropractor and applied kinesiologist. Dr. Gordin has worked with numerous musicians over his ten years of practice, and has treated many drummers with hand, wrist, and arm problems. One of the most common of these complaints is carpal tunnel syndrome, an ailment characterized by pain and/or numbness in the hand.

Carpal tunnel syndrome involves the nerve that travels through the tunnel of bones called carpals, which form the wrist. When these bones are out of place, the nerve becomes entrapped, compressed, and pinched. The problem can start out mildly and get worse with time, or it might begin to hurt immediately. Dr. Gordin elaborates: "For drummers, carpal tunnel syndrome can be a real problem. While playing, you might experience fatigue, pain or numbness, or lack of control and speed. What you're dealing with is the wiring system for the hand failing to some degree. The drummer is not really getting all the nerve energy sending the signal the way it should."

## Testing And Diagnosis

When diagnosing hand problems, Dr. Gordin says that he basically works with the functioning neurology. "We test the hand and arm by testing all of the muscle activity," he elaborates. "One of the main techniques we use is something called applied kinesiology. Kinesiology is the study of motion of the human body, and applied kinesiology is the technique that *applies* the study of motion. What we do is test the hand in various positions."

To demonstrate, Dr. Gordin asked me to rest my elbow on his desk and hold my arm upright. He then asked me to press my thumb and forefinger tip together, and tried to pull the two apart while I resisted. This continued with a combination of thumb



Dr. Arlo Gordin manually repositions joints of a carpal tunnel syndrome sufferer.

and second finger, thumb and third finger, and so on. His diagnosis? "You don't have carpal tunnel, but what you do have is a problem with the radial part of the hand. The radius bone has slipped slightly out of position, and it's jamming on the nerves. It's worse when you rotate it, because it's a bone that moves on rotation. When you rotate the hand, it jams the nerve network, and it's affecting the function of the nerves that go into the thumb and the first and second fingers. That's one of the common things we run into with drummers."

Dr. Gordin says that the three main problems found in the hand deal with improper ulnar function, radial nerve function, or carpal tunnel function. During testing, if the hand goes weak in any of these directions, the doctor knows where to begin.

"The first thing we do is a very precise series of tests followed by adjustments that correct the problem. Then we go back and post-test the thing after we've adjusted it, and sure enough, you're going to see a change. As you work on this, you see more and more of a change until the patient comes in one day and says, 'You know, I'm starting to get the feeling back in these fingers.'"

When approaching a carpal tunnel problem, Dr. Gordin says that it is common to find that the carpal tunnel is only *one* component of the problem, which is one reason why surgery has such a patchy success rate.

"Not only can the nerves that go into the hands and fingers be entrapped in the wrist," he explains, "but they can be entrapped in the elbow, or in the shoulder joint, or in the neck, which is quite common. The neck has the nerve outlet to the arm, shoulder, and hand. When your spine is lined up, all the nerve openings are wide, and all the signals get through. When you traumatize or micro-tear some of the ligament structure, you jam the vertebra out of alignment. You've now shrunk down one of the nerve openings, and you don't get all the normal signals through. This happens in the neck very frequently. The sensation that you feel at the end of your finger doesn't necessarily mean that the problem is *in* the end of your finger. It means the nerve that *goes* to the end of your finger has a problem."

"We also test the neurology of that nerve flow, all the way down to the fingertips. You've got the flow of electrons running all the signaling systems of the body, and a lot of it is dedicated to the hand and fingers. This is one of the major switchboards of the body because of the fine movement the human body has dedicated to hand control."

## Treatment

According to Dr. Gordin, the most important type of treatment involves a very specific type of adjustment. "We manually

reposition the joints that have micro-torn," he explains. "That little half a millimeter of distortion can be the difference between heaven and hell for a drummer. That joint is only going to work properly when it's *exactly* right. It just won't give 100% when it's off. The human joints don't have a lot of tolerance. They'll work a little. They'll put out *some* performance. But they won't put out optimum performance unless they're right where they belong, and unless they're operating in the range of motion the way they're supposed to."

Specific kinesiologic adjustments are also done to the muscle system. "At their belly and ends, muscles have two different types of circuit breakers," the doctor explains. "They determine the strength of that muscle before it turns itself off so that it won't sheer or tear its tendons loose from the bone. Those can get mis-set, and we reset them manually. Then we have techniques to take any adhering or sticky aspects out of the muscle flows where they glide against one another. Typically, in the case of one of these chronic bone malpositions—what would technically be called a long-term sprain—that may include rebuilding the ligament system. Unfortunately, sprains have more long-term implications than broken bones, but proper nutrition will rebuild the ligaments and also help the adrenal glands."

"B complex has been scientifically shown to cure a certain number of carpal tunnel patients," Dr. Gordin continues. "Some people are B complex *deficient*, which means that drummers who are living on *Fritos*, *Cokes*, and coffee can get a carpal tunnel by depleting their body of vitamin B. We'll often use vitamin B5 and B6 together. The B has been found to help the carpal tunnel, and the B5 helps the adrenals."

"We don't want to invade the body," Dr. Gordin explains. "We don't want to cut and damage it. When you start irritating the fine joint surfaces of the hands with surgery, ten years down the road they start to degenerate. We use a non-surgical, non-drug approach. There isn't *one* drug used for hand problems that doesn't have negative side effects. The strongest drug is cortisone. It's also one of the most dangerous. It has side effects that rebound on the human glandular system. It runs down the adrenal glands, which is really an important component in a lot of musicians' problems."

"The heart of the matter for drummers with carpal tunnel syndrome is that a joint is going to give up when its internal integrity isn't up to the load you put on it. Internal

integrity is based on a number of factors: how you're using it, if it was genetically good in the first place, and your mineral balance. Stress levels, nutritional factors, and muscle strength are all key factors that affect the integrity of a joint."

"Ongoing stress—whether it's mental, emotional, physical, or biochemical—will first make the adrenal glands hyperactive," Dr. Gordin continues. "Eventually, it wears them down to a point where they can't keep up with the business at hand. When your adrenals get worn down, you're not putting out enough cortisone, and things get inflamed. Anything that ends in 'itus' means 'inflammation of,' which is often treated with cortisone. Your body is supposed to *produce* cortisone."

Dr. Gordin says that if a drummer has stressed-out adrenals, he's going to get

more hand pain, more elbow pain, and more forearm pain. And when he plays and puts stress on the system, he gets even *more* pain. The way to deal with this, according to the doctor, is to put the drummer on the right nutrition to rebuild the adrenals.

"What we want is to get our patients to understand health," Dr. Gordin stresses. "It's a matter of creating good health day in and day out. Today's drummer is an *athlete*. He's got to have a healthy body if he wants to have any longevity in his career. Maybe he can get by for a year or two with some problems, but not if he expects to have a career later in life. I think more and more drummers are coming to realize that they're going to have to take care of themselves if they want to have a long-lasting, working career."

## From A Drummer's Perspective

by Doug Hinger

I've suffered from carpal tunnel syndrome in my left wrist for about two years. Though not *all* of these ideas may work for you, here are some of the helpful things I've come up with after some experimentation:

Change to larger, thinner crash cymbals, bigger hi-hats, and a larger, heavier ride cymbal. This may change your sound somewhat, but it will *definitely* make a difference. These cymbals produce sound more readily and eliminate the need to "lay into" your cymbals. Hard, heavy playing takes its toll on your wrists.

Change your stick size. Carpal tunnel syndrome affects your grip. Changing to larger (not necessarily heavier) sticks will help ensure that they'll stay in your hands. By the same token, heavier sticks do more of the work. The weight of the sticks will help you refrain from hitting as hard. The sticks tend to follow through more with their own weight. This will help to reduce the aggravated condition in your wrists.

Watch yourself play during practice. Check to see if you're moving the point of the stick-to-head contact each time. Make a conscious effort to strike the drum at the same point every time. If you're moving all over the place, chances are you're aggravating the situation with a lot of unnecessary movement.

Tune your drumheads tighter than normal. The extra stick response will allow you to relax and stop "pushing the stick" into the head. Don't worry too much about the sound. You can still dial in a nice fat sound on the mixing board.

Wrap your sticks with Johnson & Johnson waterproof adhesive tape, or any commercial stick wrap now available. This tape adds just a little extra width on the stick and makes gripping a little easier. You can also improve your grip by using any one of the drummer's gloves on the market today.

Hand exercisers. Any number are available at sports shops, and these can help to build endurance. Several putty products are also put out that are used to exercise your hands and wrists. Don't work them too strenuously, but regular exercise *will* pay off.

Tiger Balm salve. This is one of the greatest things for sore muscles and wrists. It's been used by the Chinese for years, and comes in two types (normal, and red, which is more powerful). Unfortunately, it can sometimes be hard to find. If you can't find it in a drugstore, try your local Chinatown. Once you get past the strong mentholylptus odor, the balm actually feels cool. It's great for loosening up muscles and alleviating the pain and aching that can come from drumming.





# Gary Burton

■ by Rick Mattingly

Considering that Gary Burton is still several years shy of being 50, the fact that his career has been going for close to 30 years is no small feat. But when you make your first recording at age 17, you have time to do a lot of things. Burton has certainly accomplished a great deal over the years. He virtually revolutionized vibes playing and set a new standard for four-mallet technique that has yet to be challenged. He is often credited with having the first true "fusion" band that blended jazz improvisation with the rhythms and energy of rock. And he has championed the work of numerous composers such as Mike Gibbs, Carla Bley, and Steve Swallow, performing and recording their music very early in their (and his) careers.

Being a virtuoso player himself, he has often collaborated with equally gifted artists such as Chick Corea, Ralph Towner, and Eberhard Weber. Besides working with musicians of his own stature, Burton has played an important role in the development of young players—both through his position as a dean at the Berklee College of Music—and as a bandleader who has hired young musicians for both live playing and recording. And along the way, he has worked with some of the finest drummers in the business.

Burton got off to a great start in that regard. The first recording he made was with guitarist Hank Garland, and Joe Morello was the drummer. Subsequently, Burton played on Morello's *It's About Time* album, and Morello performed on Burton's first solo album. "My memories of playing with Joe are pretty hazy," Burton says, "because I hardly knew what I was doing at the time. I just remember that I was very impressed.

"Most of my memories are of the teacher/student relationship that we

had," Burton continues. "Joe played a big role in helping me get into the business, and he also was full of advice about musical things. He always talked about how the gig went that he had just played, or which players he thought I should be listening to. Up to that point, I knew very few high-level professional players. I grew up in the sticks, and there were decent local players around, but there was no one 'in the know' who was connected with the people who were making the new music. So it was wonderful for me to finally meet an active professional who could point me in the right direction as to what records I should listen to and what players I should check out."

For his part, Burton was able to return the favor somewhat by helping Morello prepare his first instructional book, *New Directions In Rhythm*. "Joe always had great ideas for how to explain things," Gary recalls, "but writing things out wasn't something he did much. In those days, I would hang around a lot at his place, or I would drive him to gigs if he was working with Brubeck around the East Coast. It was great fun to talk with him for three or four hours about music. So that was a great break for me. He's always done a lot of teaching, and everybody seems to build a strong personal relationship with him as well. A lot of talented drummers over the years have spent some time getting to know him."

Burton eventually joined the Stan Getz band, and shortly thereafter he met a drummer who was to have a profound effect on him: Roy Haynes. "Roy is one of my all-time favorites," Burton says, smiling. "It's hard to choose just one favorite drummer, but he would be at the top of the list if I had to. The first time I played with him was with Stan Getz, with Steve Swallow on bass. Roy was going to be joining the group, so we had a rehearsal to learn the tunes. When Steve and I came out of that rehearsal, we both turned to each other and said, 'That's how drumming is supposed to be done.' So for me, Roy has been the model for drumming ever since. I kind of measure all the drummers I encounter by how they compare to Roy's ability to play with the musicians, and to make the time feel come under his control.

"I never had a bad night with Roy in all the years I played with him," Gary adds. "I played with him about two or three



years with Stan, then about the same amount of time in my group, and occasionally have played with him again. All drummers will tell you how he deserves more recognition than he's gotten, although certainly musicians recognize Roy's tremendous abilities. So he's extremely special in my memory."

A highlight of Roy's association with Burton was his drum solo on a tune called "Peau Douce" from the *Times Square* album [Transcribed in *MD's* May '90 *Drum Soloist*]. A primary distinction was that the band continued to comp behind Roy's solo, giving the drums a more musical setting in which to function. "That was my idea," Gary explains, "because I've always thought that extended drum solos often get boring. Even though Roy's tend to be among the most interesting, my instinct has always been to put something with the drum solo. After all, none of the rest of us suddenly have to play by ourselves when we're taking turns in the band. Everybody appreciates the 'being played with' part of the experience.

"So I haven't used the open drum solo concept in my band for a long time," Burton continues. "I much prefer the context where the drummer plays on the tune with us, with some kind of backing. I especially feel strongly about that in terms of records. A record is different than a live concert in two ways. First of all, you're going to *see* the concert. Drums is a very visual experience; so is

vibes. And you're not going to see it on the record. The other, bigger factor is that when you go to a concert, you hear it once. A record is meant to be listened to repeatedly. To my ears, drum solos don't hold up as well in repeated listenings, so I rarely put drum solos on my records."

When Haynes left the Burton Quartet, Bob Moses joined the group. Where Roy's drumming tends to be ultra crisp and precise, Moses comes across as very loose and elastic. Going from Haynes to Moses would seem to be a rather drastic change. "When I hire a musician," Gary explains, "it's not so much that I'm looking for someone who sounds like the guy I've just had; I'm looking for someone who has the same effect on me. They actually may be quite different in style. The thing that matters is how it feels to me when we play together. What's the rapport? How do we interact as players? In fact, Moses and Roy went back and forth several times. Roy did the first record I made with the Quartet, *Duster*, but was still working with Stan Getz at the time and couldn't work with me on a regular basis. So Moses worked the first year that I had a band, and then Roy came into the group for a few years, then Moses came back, and after a succession of changes Moses came back a third time as well. So even though Roy and Moses were different-sounding, they worked within the group context equally well.

"I always thought Bob was extremely well-suited to my music," Burton says. "Bob has very unique approaches, and concepts that are very imaginative. He has one of the most creative minds I've ever met among musicians, and he comes up with some very off-the-wall things that are just great. He was particularly good for my music, which—especially in those days—had a lot of unusual time changes and rhythm feels and so on. This was at a time when most jazz was simply syncopated swing time, and we were early in the game in terms of experimenting with straight-8th and different kinds of time feels, and mixing different styles. Bob was very adaptable at this sort of thing."

When Moses left the Burton group in the late '60s to join Jack DeJohnette's group, Compost, Bill Goodwin became Gary's drummer. "Bill is a wonderful musician and really nice guy," Gary says. "He wasn't as unique in style or personality as, say, Roy or Moses were. To

me, he was—and I mean this in the most respectful sense—more of a journeyman drummer that played everything well and correct and very professionally, and he fit in very well with the group. He was in the band something like four years, until I moved to Boston, and then I let the musicians go that I had been using in New York and hired some Boston guys. I still see Bill a lot because he plays with Phil Woods, and we occasionally share gigs with them. As a player he was consistent and traditional—good solid drumming. We had a lot of good times together."

After moving to Boston, Burton recorded an album called *The New Quartet*, which featured Harry Blazer on drums. Then Moses rejoined the band for a spell, during which time Pat Metheny became a member of Gary's group. When Moses left, Danny Gottlieb was hired. "Danny came into the group on a recommendation from Pat," Burton recalls. "They had gone to school together, and when Moses left, Pat suggested Danny. He was in the band until Pat left, and Danny went with Pat to be in his band.

"Danny was fresh out of school when he joined the group," Gary says, "so my memory of him would be that these were his years of fine-tuning his playing skills. We spent a lot of time talking about how to interpret this, what I was looking for on this piece, and that kind of thing. Five years later, he would have already known what was called for. But a lot of it was new for him—new situations to be in. So it was definitely a teacher/student type of relationship, which is often the case with me and young musicians. I always have a lot of young players coming through the band, and I'm quite used to that. In fact, I love young players; they are often more exciting and fun to work with than the seasoned pros, who might be a little smoother and have a few more tricks at their disposal. But there is a wonderful freshness and willingness to try anything that is very appealing about young guys starting out."

The next drummer to spend a considerable amount of time in Burton's

group certainly fit the above description. Mike Hyman was 19 when Gary first hired him, and he remained in the band five years. "I first met Mike at a music camp when he was 14 years old," Gary remembers. "I noticed how talented he was, and I remember thinking to myself that someday I would probably run into this kid again. Five years went by, and I got a call from Moses, who said, 'There's a guy down here in Brooklyn that is really your kind of drummer. If you ever need someone, I really recommend this guy.' And he said the drummer's name was Mike Hyman. I thought, 'This has to be the same guy.' I didn't need a drummer at the time, but three months later I did. I called Mike up, arranged an audition, and as I had suspected five years ago, this guy had continued to develop and had great instincts. He had already been playing some with Getz and with Gerry Mulligan, even though he was just 19. So he joined the band and lasted five years before he decided to move to San Francisco.

"Even though he would probably not be a name that most people would think of first in terms of the major players that have been with my bands, I considered him one of the most ideal. I always wished that he would have gotten a little more notice during the years he was with the band. But while he was with me, the attention always seemed to go to somebody up front—a flashier kind of star soloist. But I think Mike is a wonderful player."

Hyman recorded three albums with Burton, and one can clearly hear how he went from a somewhat

over-eager young player who verged on overplaying to a more mature musician who had the confidence to play less but make it mean more. "Starting at 19 was pretty young," Burton comments, "and it's pretty hard to be a mature drummer at a young age. There are so many things to get under control that a lot of years of playing are required to reach that stage. But as I listen to things we did together, I can definitely hear big changes from year to year as he was getting better at playing.

continued on page 118

"From the moment I finish counting off the tune, I'm no longer in charge. The drummer is."





# The Evolution Of The Hi-Hat

• by Chet Falzerano

The hi-hat as we know it had humble beginnings, largely due to economics and space. At the turn of the century, vaudeville pits were notoriously small. To accommodate this lack of space and to cut costs, percussion sections were reduced from a snare drummer, bass drummer, and cymbal player to a single person. As such, the trap set was born. Bass drum pedals of various designs were constructed, and most included a second beater that struck a cymbal mounted on the bass drum hoop. (See *Figure 1*.) This apparatus was often called a "clanger"—rightly so, since the resulting tone was a rather monotonous clanging sound.

Drummers desiring the more pleasant sound of two cymbals played together first developed the snowshoe pedal. Its construction was simply two cymbals mounted between two foot-shaped boards with a spring hinge. (See *Figure 2*.) The player slipped his foot into a toe strap (hence the term "snowshoe") and could either execute a crash or "chick" sound, depending on the attack.

About the same time, Walberg & Auge, of Worcester, Massachusetts, manufactured a more sophisticated version of the "sock cymbal" or "low boy." It resembled the hi-hat of today. (See *Figure 3*.) However, the cymbals were only 9" from the floor. Normally the cymbals used on both of these were 10" in diameter, some with large bells (approximately 5" in diameter).

The subject of who actually

developed the hi-hat has received much speculation. The late Jo Jones, one of the true masters of the hi-hat, shared his thoughts in his January '84 *MD* cover feature. According to Jones, "Cuba Austin was with the McKinney Cotton Pickers [1926], and he had this little sock cymbal that you used to slide your foot into. I couldn't reach down there and play the sock cymbal on the floor, so through necessity, I went and got a pipe. That's how the hi-hat came."

Whether Papa Jo originated the hi-hat is uncertain, but the transition from low boy to hi-hat was rapid. The 1928 catalogs of Leedy, Slingerland, and Ludwig, and the 1929 Walberg & Auge catalog, all picture the low boy and the hi-hat simultaneously. Both pedals had identical foot plates, and both were manufactured by Walberg & Auge, but were marketed by various companies.

Before the hi-hat was universally accepted, there were several variations of the sock cymbal. The 1928 Slingerland catalog shows the "New WOW Sock Pedal," referring to it as "a real 'socky' sock." (See *Figure 4*.) Rather than the typical horizontal stationary bottom cymbal being struck by a moving top cymbal, the WOW cymbals were struck together in a vertical position when the pedal was depressed. Ludwig offered a similar vertical sock pedal in their 1935 catalog. The *Duncan* pedal claimed, "The foot does not have to counteract the weight of the cymbals...so the

action is easy and light." (See *Figure 5*.)

Some drummers were not certain the device should be foot operated. Many hand-held cymbals were also listed in early catalogs. (See *Figure 6*.) Referred to as "hand sock cymbals," "squash cymbals," "sting cymbals," and the most unusual, "bock-a-da-bock rhythm cymbals," their popularity didn't prove lasting. The left foot seemed like the obvious way to go.

It was during the mid-to-late '30s that the low boy lost favor to the hi-hat. Far and away the most popular hi-hat was the Walberg & Auge #501, also known as the original "Krupa" hi-hat. Slingerland, Leedy, and Ludwig offered this same hi-hat with their own model number. The #502 remained popular up until the '60s. (See *Figure 7*.)

Almost all improvements to the hi-hat occurred during the first ten years of its existence. The first improvement was a rather humorous offering by Walberg & Auge. The *Perfection Extra High Hat Sock Cymbal Pedal With Holders For Two Crash Cymbals And Two Tom Toms* claimed it would "attract the attention of your audience."

Figure 1

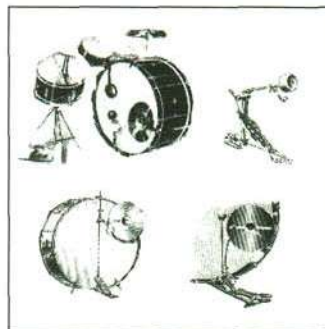
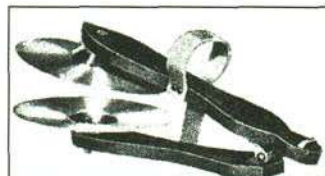


Figure 2



(See *Figure 8*.) Many of the "new" features of today, however, were thought of in the '30s. Direct pull was offered by Walberg & Auge on their *Zip* hi-hat, as well as on their *Economy* hi-hat. Though most early hi-hats had a fixed height (approximately 36"), the *DeLuxe Adjustable High-Hat* was adjustable from 32" to 38". The lower cymbal angle was also adjustable on this model. Probably the most unique hi-hat was the Walberg & Auge *Twinsok*. (See *Figure 9*.) Offering the player two sets of hi-hat cymbals on one stand, it was also listed in the 1939 Gretsch catalog as the *Twin Hi-Hat*. "With this pedal you can

Figure 3

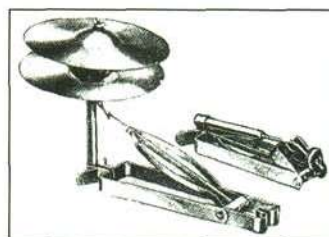


Figure 4

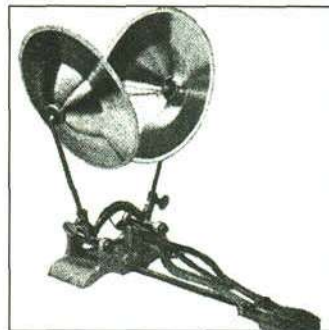
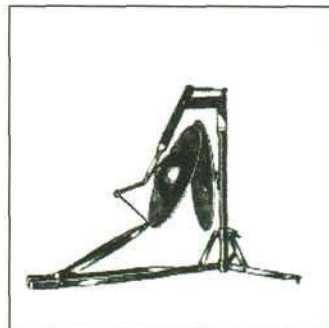


Figure 5



maintain a forceful rhythm on one unit while the other is used for stick manipulations." Both the *Zip* models and the *Twinsok* featured clutches for the top

Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8

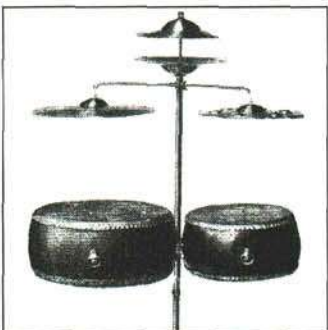


Figure 9



cymbals. Most other models had threaded top cymbal shafts. Height adjustment was accomplished by moving a clamp below the top cymbal and tightening down a wing nut on top.

It is the inventive genius of Billy Gladstone that we owe thanks to for the "new" remote hi-hats of today. Also listed in the '39 Gretsch catalog, "The Gretsch-Gladstone hi-hat embodies many features of practical value that every drummer will instantly appreciate. There's no floor stand! [See Figure 10.] Instead, the operating assembly clamps right on the bass drum hoop, adjustable to height and horizontal position. The pedal is entirely free and can be placed in any position that the drummer finds convenient and comfortable...this is the outfit for the jobbing drummer." A most innovative creation obviously years ahead of its time.

The deep-cup or large-bell 10" hi-hat cymbals continued to be listed in these late '30s catalogs, but their popularity among drummers was diminishing. Though some drummers were still using 10" cymbals with normal bells, many were switching to 11" and 12" sizes. The diversity of the cymbals was still thin, producing a splashy sound. The 12" and 13" were normal through the mid '40s, then were switched to 14". With few exceptions, the 14" has been the standard to date. One exception within recent years has been the

Figure 10



13" cymbals; many drummers have been going back to this smaller size.

What improvements have occurred since the late '30s? Actually, aside from the changes in cymbals (size, weight, porting, etc.), the improvements have been few. Whether the "iron age" of the late '70s could be considered an improvement—where drummers' biceps improved as a result of double-braced, oversized, overweight hardware—is debatable. The addition of variable tensioning devices has definitely improved the action of hi-hat pedals. Drummers can adjust the action to their personal taste. Another improvement, the quick release clutch, is a boon to double bass players. Other than that, the evolution of the hi-hat occurred in a relatively short span of about thirty

years, from 1910 to 1940.

What can we learn from all this? Plenty, especially if we study the masters by listening to old recordings. Papa Jo Jones, Gene Krupa, Buddy Rich, Chick Webb, Davey Tough, and Big Sid Catlett all had incredible swinging hi-hat technique. For a more contemporary study of hi-hat technique, refer to the June '86 *MD Sound Supplement* "Focus On Hi-Hat," by Peter Erskine.

Thanks to Jim Pettit and John Aldridge for their original catalog pages.

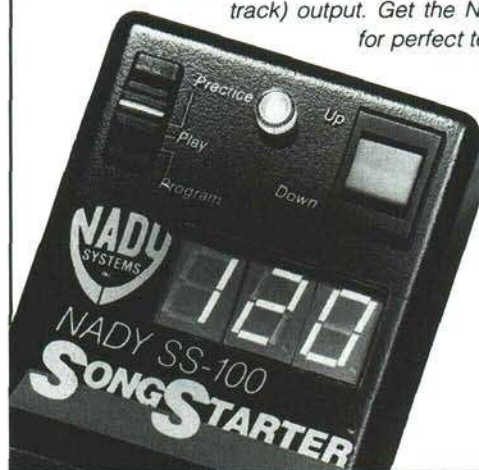


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## RECORDINGS

CHICK COREA ELEKTRIC BAND—*Inside Out*. GRP GRD-9601. C. Corea: pno, syn. Dave Weckl: dr. J. Patitucci: bs. E. Marienthal: sx. F. Gambale: gtr. *Inside Out / Make A Wish (Parts 1 And 2) / Stretch It (Parts 1 And 2) / Kicker / Child's Play / Tale Of Daring (Chapters 1, 2, 3, And 4)*.



Something happened to the Elektric Band since their previous recording, and whatever it was, the result is the best album the group has ever made. I tend to think that the Akoustic Band might deserve some of the credit. When Corea, Patitucci, and Weckl started playing as a trio, the emphasis changed from tight funk grooves to looser jazz feels, and there was a sense of interplay between the players that had never been evident in the larger Elektric Band setting. On this disc, even with the addition of Marienthal and Gambale, that sense of intimacy among the players has been retained, with the result that it sounds more like a band now, rather than just a collection of talented individuals.

Another possible explanation for the difference could be in Corea's writing. The material on *Inside Out* is much more complex and interesting than most of the tunes on previous Elektric Band albums. Maybe Corea simply experienced an especially creative period in his writing, but I have a feeling it has something to do with the

fact that he's worked with this particular group of musicians for so long now that he's actually writing for *them*. I recall a similar occurrence with Corea's Return To Forever band with Lenny White, Stanley Clarke, and Al DiMeola. Like the first couple of Elektric Band albums, the early RTF records featured good compositions played by fine musicians. But as Corea and the band got to know each other better, the music and the musicians became as one: It was the perfect music for those musicians to play, and no one else could have played that music as well.

That is exactly the situation with *Inside Out*. For Dave Weckl in particular, this music calls on every aspect of his musicianship, and lets him realize his abilities to the fullest.

Rick Mattingly

GRANT HART—*Intolerance*. SST 215. G. Hart: all instruments. *All Of My Senses / Now That You Know Me / Fanfare In D Major (Come, Come) / The Main/Twenty-Five Forty-One / Roller-Rink / You're The Victim / Anything / She Can See The Angels Coming / Reprise*.



No, Grant Hart isn't going to win any drum battles with L.A. studio heavies, and yeah, the time may stray slightly here and there across *Intolerance*, but that's not really the point here. In fact, such apparent disregard of modern studio wizardry might account for some of the charm of this record.

Hart, drummer and one of

the lead singer/songwriters of late, lamented college radio giants Husker Du, has put out his first solo album, playing all the instruments himself and proving that there's more to putting out a "successful" album than spiffy playing. He is also among a growing number of musicians who prove that drummers can be leaders, can have valid and creative ideas, and with a little knowledge of a few melodic instruments, can create some moving music.

The songs are the thing here, and, being the writer and singer of Husker Du's better "pop" numbers, Hart certainly has the melodic savvy to write good tunes. His tastes seem to run toward the psychedelic, but Hart's unique senses pull the songs in his own direction, much more so than, say, Phil Collins was able to on the Beatles' "Tomorrow Never Knows." In general the songs wander more in style and feel than Husker Du's records usually did, and the whole affair has a very loose, "basement studio" quality about it. Hart's technical prowess may be limited, but is nonetheless adequate enough to pull these songs off.

There might not be a lot for aspiring drummers to learn from *Intolerance*, other than some hints on how to put together a strong, emotional, and unique piece of music. There's still room for that these days, though, isn't there?

Adam Budofsky

JOHN SCOFIELD—*Who's Who?* Novus/RCA 3071-2-N. J. Scofield: gtr. K. Kirkland: kybd. A. Jackson, E. Gomez, S. Swallow: bs. Steve Jordan, Billy Hart, Adam Nussbaum: dr. Sammy Figueroa: perc. D. Liebman: sx. *Looks Like Meringue / Cassidae / The Beatles / Spoons / Who's Who / How The West Was Won / Beckon Call / New Strings Attached / How To Marry A Millionaire / FatDancer*.



This is a reissue CD of cuts taken from two albums made about ten years ago. Six of the cuts are from a record also called *Who's Who*, which was cut in 1979 and featured two different bands—one with Steve Jordan and the other with Billy Hart. The other four cuts come from an album made in 1980 called *Bar Talk*, with Adam Nussbaum on drums.

For those more familiar with Jordan's rock drumming, the four tracks he appears on offer a nice look back at his jazz-fusion playing. He isn't cracking backbeats on these tunes, but is displaying a nice touch and sense of color on the cymbals. And on the title cut Jordan plays solidly in the Ziggy Modeliste/David Garibaldi funk mode, while giving it some twists of his own. There is also a sense of energy in Jordan's drumming, which has always been one of his prime characteristics.

The two cuts that feature Billy Hart are a nice contrast to Jordan's. Whereas Steve's time is solidly in the pocket, Hart plays around the time. That's not to imply that Hart is playing free, or that there is ever a question as to where the pulse is. It's just that Hart has a magical way of defining the time by alluding to it rather than stating it on every beat.

The four tracks featuring Adam Nussbaum tend to split the difference between Jordan and Hart. Stylistically, Nussbaum is closer to Hart's jazz feel than to Jordan's funk/fusion. But Nussbaum does tend

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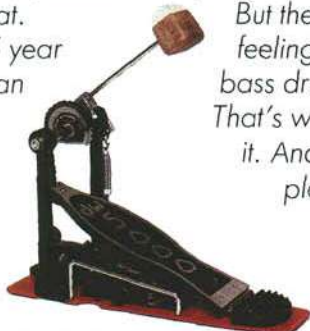
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to play more straight-ahead than Hart. Because Adam's tunes were done in a guitar-trio format, he has plenty of room to play without cluttering up the track, and he proves himself a master of tasteful drum comping.

*Rick Mattingly*

**SOUNDGARDEN—*Louder Than Love*.** A&M 5252. C. Cornell: vcl. K. Thayil: gtr. H. Yamamoto: bs. Matt Cameron: dr. *Ugly Truth / Hands All Over / Gun / Power Trip / Get On The Snake / Full On Kevin's Mom / Loud Love / I Awake / No Wrong No Right / Uncovered / Big Dumb Sex / Full On (Reprise).*



Soundgarden is either intricately simple, or simply intricate. Either way, metal fans can't ignore the lasting, compelling impression the band makes on its debut record. Mixing Zeppelin-esque rhythms, a dash of Black Sabbath's musical darkness, and the modern energy of Jane's Addiction, Soundgarden carves its own hip niche in today's metal scene.

What sets Soundgarden apart from the wealth of competing bands, though, is that not only do they take on odd time signatures, but they take them on with taste and make them groove. That, in large part, can be credited to the well-rounded drum work of Matt Cameron.

On the surface, average listeners won't be able to tell the 5/4 twists in "Get On The Snake" from the bombastic drive of "Ugly Truth" or the

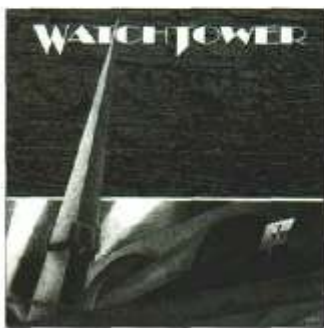
multi-rhythmic changes of "I Awake," because Cameron superbly locks each into a solid groove—no easy task underneath some of Thayil's twisted guitar layerings!

Cameron is crisp and clean throughout, guiding the band through carefully measured tempo changes in "Gun" and "Full On Kevin's Mom." Meanwhile, his subtle dynamic shadings, careful cymbal and tom accents, and sparse, tasteful fills, such as in the 9/4 fade ending of "I Awake," effectively place a personal stamp on Soundgarden's unique brand of mood metal.

This record isn't for the faint of heart, but will equally please both beat-driven headbangers and musical connoisseurs.

*Matt Peiken*

**WATCHTOWER—*Control And Resistance*.** Noise Intl. WK 44458-2. A Tecchio: vcl. R. Jarzombek: gtr. D. Keyser: bs. Rick Colaluca: dr. *Instruments Of Random Murder / The Eldritch / Mayday In Kiev / The Fall Of Reason / Control And Resistance / Hidden Instincts / Life Cycles / Dangerous Toy.*



Why Watchtower chose *Control And Resistance* as the title for their second album is a mystery. The band shows little of both on what is easily one of the busiest metal albums to come out in years.

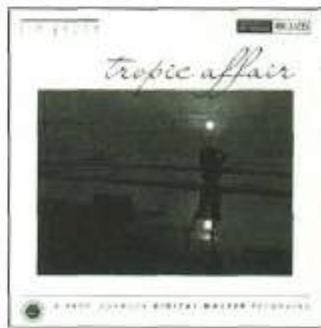
No doubt about it, these guys can play. Few metal bands today can touch the technical precision Watchtower displays here. Colaluca alone will have listen-

ers rewinding cuts again and again to pin down what he's playing, how he's playing it, and in what time signature it's in—if any! Colaluca shows off his jazz influences and his deft double-bass work throughout and makes his biggest impression with the tasteful use of splashes, open hi-hat accents, and the bell of the ride cymbal.

The only problem is that Watchtower rarely settles into any kind of a groove, resulting in an album that, though technically impressive, lacks real substance. The only number the band truly settles into is "Life Cycles," which hints at what they are capable of when they apply a little restraint. Should Watchtower ever couple its technical prowess with compositional discretion, the result could be awesome. But on this record, one frenzied cut seems to bleed right into the other.

*Matt Peiken*

**JIM BROCK—*Tropic Affair*.** Reference Recordings RR-31CD. J. Brock, Beverly Botsford: perc. T. Howe: pno. J. Sharp: gtr. J. Thornton: trp, flghn. G. Kawamoto: bs. Donnie Marshall: dr. T. Gordon: sx, fl. J. Goodman: acdn. B. Gerhardt: syn. *Pass-A-Grill / Ladies Of The Calabash / Tropic Affair / Anya / Quo Qui's Groove / Side-Walk / Palm-Palm Girls / O Vazio.*



This album has been gaining high points on the jazz and crossover charts across the country, and for good reason. The music is colorful, moody,

and evocative, as per Jim Brock's stated intention in the liner notes: "My goal...was to put pictures in the mind of the listener."

As a percussionist, Jim Brock has few peers when it comes to pure expressiveness. Further comments by Jim indicate that, although the general feel of the album is "tropical" and leaned heavily on Brazilian influences, other ethnic and purely personal influences were brought in as well, so as to "capture the colors of the tropics [using] every crayon in the box."

Several of the tunes feature brisk and lively feels ("Pass-A-Grill," "Quo Qui's Groove," and "Side-Walk"), while the balance of the album ranges from the smooth, mellow groove of "Ladies Of The Calabash" to the lovely ballad "Anya." Instrumental work from all players is excellent throughout, with special kudos to Brock, Beverly Botsford, and Donnie Marshall. Marshall in particular is always inventive on the drums, but never overbearing—contributing just the right balance of low-key colorations and high-energy dynamics when called for.

As might be expected when the leader is a percussionist, percussion sounds are mixed well up front throughout the album, but Brock never takes advantage of this situation. Instead, he uses a myriad collection of sounds with appropriateness and musicality, adding variety and emotion to the tracks. A tasty drums-and-percussion interplay occurs on "Pass-A-Grill," and Jim personally adds a number of unique sounds to "Palm-Palm Girls" and "O Vazio."

Whether you are interested in listening to one of today's most outstanding multi-percussionists demonstrate his taste and skill, or just want to lay back and enjoy some "warm, sensual, and romantic" music, this album should give you what



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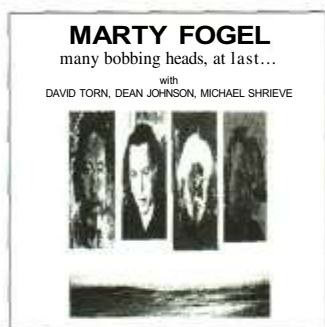
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**MARTY FOGEL**—*Many Bobbing Heads, At Last...* CMP CD37. M. Fogel: sx, clr. D. Torn: gtr. D. Johnson: bs. Michael Shrieve: dr, perc. *Zavana / Guinea / Through The Screen / Owasco / Never Said Goodbye / Unlikely Beast Slayer / Land Of Giants / Luminous / Cool It.*



This album is alive with the joy of creativity. The musicians are obviously enjoying themselves, and there is no sense that they are trying to fit into any kind of pre-established mold. In fact, it's somewhat surprising that this album actually exists, given the average record company's requirement that the "product" be easily identifiable and that it can be clearly labeled and marketed. But CMP has proven themselves to be more concerned with music than with marketing potential, seeming to trust in the philosophy that Michael Shrieve once described in an *MD* interview: "If you do something interesting, then interesting people will find it."

And Shrieve provides a lot of interest on this disc. His drumming has always been uniquely his own, combining a variety of influences and styles. In a setting like this one, he is free to pick and choose from his repertoire at will, resulting in a recorded performance that shows remarkable depth and

ability. And it never sounds forced or preconceived. Throughout the nine tracks, there is a sense of spontaneity in Shrieve's playing that suggests he is simply reacting to the music around him and letting whatever comes out to come out. Whereas several of Michael's recent solo projects have tended to focus more on specific aspects of his playing, this album displays more of the total picture.

Rick Mattingly

## VIDEOS

### BUDDY RICH MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP CONCERT TAPE TWO

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64 Minutes

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This is the second half of a concert held in October '89 to honor Buddy Rich, and features Dave Weckl, Vinnie Colaiuta, and Steve Gadd performing with the Buddy Rich Big Band. (The first half of the concert, featuring Louie Bellson, Gregg Bissonette, and Dennis Chambers, is also available on video, and was reviewed in the May '90

issue of *MD*.) The tape also includes two TV performances of Buddy and his band from the '60s.

Weckl gets things started with an especially funky rendition of "Mercy, Mercy." Comparing this performance with the classic recording Buddy made of this chart—and noting that the band is playing exactly the same thing both times—one begins to appreciate how much the drummer affects the overall feel of the tune. Buddy's recorded version sounds very '60-ish; Dave's drumming brings the tune into the '80s (maybe even the '90s). Weckl is then featured on an extended solo in which he displays his usual brilliance, followed by a spirited rendition of "Bugle Call Rag."

A rather obnoxious MC then appears to introduce Cathy Rich singing "Them There Eyes." What she actually sings, however, is "That's Enough," which she performed on the *Rich In London* album several years ago. Cathy's husband, Steve Arnold, does the drumming on this segment.

This is followed by a vintage clip of Buddy and his band debuting the song "The Rotten Kid" on a TV show from the '60s. One is struck by how effortlessly Buddy seemed to play. By contrast, the artists on this concert seemed to be working very hard, and none of them appeared to be having as much fun as Buddy always had when he played.

With the possible exception of Vinnie Colaiuta, that is. He begins with a straight-ahead performance of "Ya Gotta Try" that's notable for its relaxed feel and non-showoff attitude. Vinnie's performance recalls an important aspect of Rich's playing that is too-often forgotten: He was an excellent accompanist. Every tune did *not* feature a blazing drum solo, and even on the tunes that did, most of

the chops and pyrotechnics were held in reserve until needed. Colaiuta tends to play the same way on this tape. He throws in his share of "Vinnie stuff," but only as an occasional spice. The meat is solid, swinging timekeeping. Colaiuta then performs an extended solo that leads into an uptempo version of "Big Swing Face." Again, the focus is on time and feel, and Vinnie appears to be enjoying himself in this setting.

Steve Gadd is up next, playing the shuffle feel of "Keep The Customer Satisfied" as only Gadd can play a shuffle. The emphasis here is on intensity with a minimum of chops displays. Gadd then goes into a solo that combines funk and rudimental playing into the style that Gadd defined. Gadd closes his segment with a straight-ahead version of "Just In Time."

After Gadd's extreme intensity, the mood is relieved by a clip of Buddy performing "Mexicali Rose." The focus here is on Buddy's humor, as he mugs and clowns his way through a spirited chart that gives him plenty of opportunities to show off.

The tape concludes with Colaiuta, Gadd, and Weckl playing in a drum-trio setting. After solos from each of them, they trade eights for a while over a funk groove before finishing out with a unison statement. It's an interesting display of their different musical personalities: Weckl's syncopated precision, Gadd's military/funk intensity, and Colaiuta's "go for it" adventurousness.

Watching this tape, I was reminded of something Buddy said once when I was interviewing him. He was complaining about drummers who could only play in one setting, such as a trio or rock band. "If you're going to call yourself a drummer," Buddy said, "you should be able to play in any setting. Let those guys sit in with my



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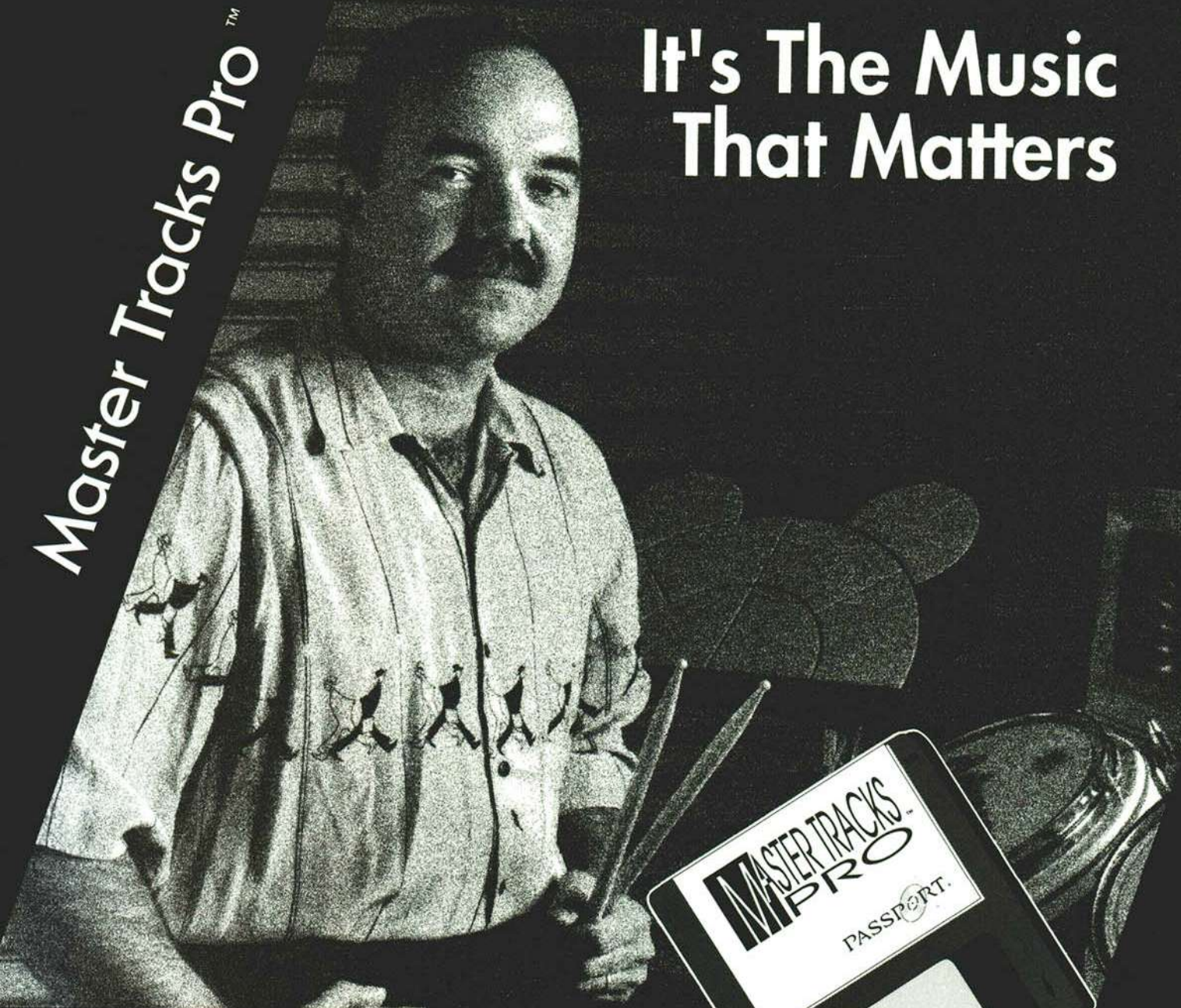
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band, and see if they know what to do." Weckl, Colaiuta, and Gadd certainly knew what to do.

*Rick Mattingly*

## GREGG BISSONETTE

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From the man who swung Maynard Ferguson and rocks David Lee Roth comes a well-rounded video that's valuable for beginners to pros. Gregg's opening extended ten-minute-plus solo is in itself a gold mine of information, covering everything from whispering brush to raging hard rock dynamics in a coherent piece spanning funk, Latin, jazz, and rock feels. And of course, his double bass work is some of the most impressive around. A *Private Lesson II* is being planned, and hopefully this sequel will feature more close-up camera on Gregg's famous feet.

Gregg's tutoring is relaxed and friendly. After offering brief advice and demonstrations on personal musical development, practicing grooving and time, grips, and rudiments, he

grooves over a fusion-ish instrumental track that leaves plenty of space for hot licks. One outstanding section for advanced players is a feature on Latin playing focusing on contemporary songo drumming and the role of the clave within this genre.

Other segments include a breakdown of some of Gregg's own licks, double bass work, swing playing with an emphasis on the ride cymbal as a focal voice, beat displacement ideas played against a straight drum machine pattern and then over a sequenced instrumental track, and a well-illustrated demonstration of brush stroke patterns. A short bit of up-tempo Latin brush work here proves to be a fiery little surprise.

The venues Gregg has been playing in lately have been large arenas, so it's great to get this close-up behind his seat. Like any well-planned private lesson, there's a lot to be learned through the ears and eyes in these 77 minutes. Even better, this lesson offers instant replay.

*Jeff Potter*

## BOOKS

### HAL BLAINE AND THE WRECKING CREW

by Hal Blaine with David Goggin

Publisher: Mix Books

6400 Hollis St., #12

Emeryville CA 94608

Price: \$19.95

Many mature drummers know that Hal Blaine is the legendary beat behind hundreds of rock and pop hits from the late '50s to the early '80s (including 40 Number-one and 350 Top-ten records). Some also know that in the '60s Hal designed the large multiple tom-tom drumset that today is standard equipment for rockers everywhere. And readers of this magazine may fondly remember Hal's warm and worldly career advice column a few years back. But

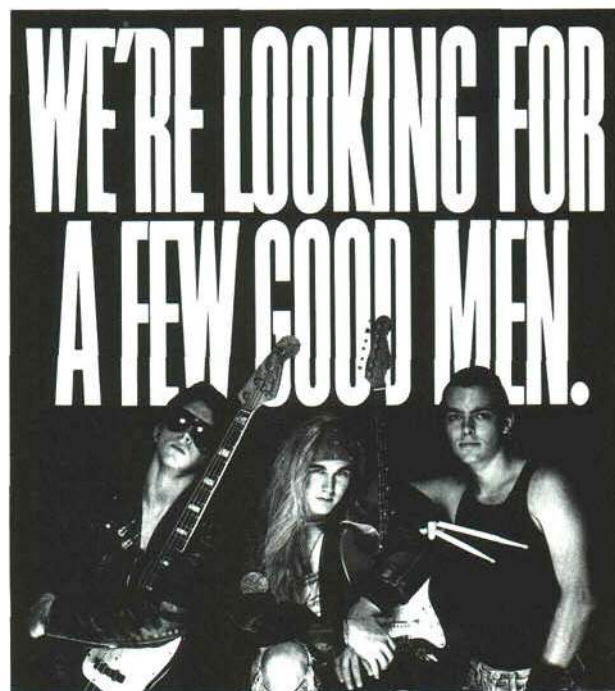
how many also know that he revolutionized the equipment cartage system in Los Angeles...or that he introduced the film industry to the miking techniques that he had helped establish in the record studios...or that he thinks the bassist Carol Kaye just may be the one woman he should have married?

Add to these topics the story of a difficult childhood with immigrant parents, candid discussions of corruption inside and outside the music business, and typically witty remembrances of musical and personal experiences with Phil Spector, the cream of Hollywood studio players known collectively as The Wrecking Crew, Frank and Nancy Sinatra, the Beach Boys, Jan & Dean, and the Monkees (among many others), and you have the thoroughly delightful autobiography of a drummer

who truly has seen it all.

Younger players should note that though the bulk of Hal's work dates from the "classic rock" era, this text is rich with the kind of timeless wisdom and positive energy that we have come to expect from the father of modern studio drumming. There are 24 pages of entertaining insider photographs, the monumental discography, a foreword by Jim Keltner, and affectionate testimonials by everyone from Herb Alpert to Ringo Starr. Though understandably short on detail in a few controversial areas, this heart-warming book is required reading not only for every drummer, but also for anyone who loves American popular music.

*Harold Howland*



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## READERS' PLATFORM

continued from page 6

The problem is, though, that I can't find proper ear protection.

My sensitivity to sound is so strong that conventional earplugs won't work. As my problem has worsened, I've found that I cannot use any earplug that has a rating of less than 35dBs. For the past six months I've used the only 35dB plugs I could find. These are made of foam, and can be rolled up and placed inside the ear. For a while they worked, yet problems began to develop: They were hard to insert, they were not always consistent, and they were very difficult to take out. I even became allergic (in some way) to these plugs. Every time I placed the plug in my right ear, I would experience a sharp pain. It was as if I had to stick a needle in my arm in order to play. Yet, I wanted to play, so I dealt with these difficulties. One night, after a concert, one of the plugs got stuck in my right ear. It took me over an hour to remove the plug. That night, I decided not to use those earplugs again.

I used to play seven days a week. Now, when I'm fortunate enough to play, it's like an event—as opposed to a daily routine. I miss playing and performing, and I miss the sound of natural drums, without muffling and without earplugs. I write to *MD* as a call for help. I've spoken with drummers, doctors, and audiologists, and nobody seems to know how to handle my problem. If anyone out there has experienced this problem, or could help me to solve it, I would greatly appreciate it. If not, at least other drummers could be made aware that the problem exists.

Paul Lyons

19 Baylor Circle

White Plains NY 10605

*Editor's note: MD is, and always has been, acutely aware of the potential risks to a drummer's hearing posed by the very instrument on which he or she performs—especially at the volume levels many contemporary drummers are involved with. As a matter of fact, a lengthy feature on the subject, entitled "Are Drums Harming Your Ears?" was presented as far back as November 1981. However, with the changing aspects of the music business, and the additional research into hearing problems that has taken place since that feature was presented, we agree that it is time to take another in-depth look at the problem. Next month's issue will carry such a feature, entitled "Drumming: How Risky Is It To Your Hearing?"*



## IT'S QUESTIONABLE

continued from page 14

*intended to work with the other elements of the system. Another batter head/front head combination would provide an entirely different sound to begin with, and so it is impossible to predict whether cutting slits in the front head would or would not give your drum a "better sound." Most drummers do cut some sort of air-escape hole in the front head of their bass drum—partially as a method of avoiding drum "boominess," and partly to allow access to the interior of the drum for muffling and miking applications. If you have a spare front head that you can experiment with, you might want to try cutting a few small slits in it and see if you like the outcome. All other factors being equal, you might expect to get a sound somewhere between that of a drum with a solid front head and that of one with a 4"-6" hole.*

*Using the Evans format as a basis, place the head on a cutting board, so that you are working from the back side and the head is flat against the work surface. Using a small marking pen or pencil, establish the size of the area you wish to make your slits in. A 3" square or circle might be a good starting point. It should be positioned at a point that will be opposite where the beater strikes the batter head when the front head is placed on the drum. Bisect your area, so that you are not cutting slits the full length, but rather in short segments. You want a strip of head material in between the slits both horizontally and vertically for tension strength and to avoid tearing. The slits should be about 1/8" to 3/16" wide by about 1 1/4" long, and not less than 3/16" apart. Since cutting with a razor knife can be tricky, even when done with care, it would be a good idea to sketch out your slit design completely, so that you can see the number of slits and the layout before you actually begin to cut. This will allow you to make adjustments to your design.*

*As with any drumhead modification, cutting slits into a front head is going to provide different results on different drumkits and under different playing applications. It has proven to be effective for Evans as an element of their total system design. Whether or not it will be effective for you will depend on what head combination you use, how you play, and what you want to hear out of a bass drum.*





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## UPDATE

continued from page 9

**Walfredo Reyes, Jr.** on the road with Santana.

**Matt Sorum** working on the Cult's new album.

**Gregg Bissonette** working on new David Lee Roth LP

**Jon Farriss** in the studio with INXS.

**Eddie Bayers** on new Canadian artist Patricia Conroy's album, K.T. Oslin's newest, and Bob Seger's new album.

**Peter Criss** joined former KISS-mate Ace Frehley during Ace's show at L.A.'s Palace Theater this past April. According to bystanders, the duo burned through a version of the KISS classic, "Deuce."

**Charlie Adams** on the new release by Yanni. Charlie was also recently on the road with Yanni and the Dallas Symphony, performing benefit concerts for AIDS research.

After returning from a Japanese tour with the Michael Brecker Band, **Adam Nussbaum** left for Europe to perform with the WDR Radio Big Band in Cologne, Germany. Recent recording efforts by Adam include new albums by Brecker, Tom Howell, and Niels Lan Doky.

**Mark Feldman** is currently on the

road with Hearts and Minds, supporting their self-titled debut record.

Jazz drummer **Eddie Metz, Jr.** currently touring the west coast with his group, Black Dogs.

**Phil Fisher** was featured on the recent Academy Of Country Music Awards telecast. He will be touring Europe this summer with George Strait's Ace In The Hole band.

**Brian Williams** appeared on the latest album for the gospel group the Jackson Southernaires. He also can be heard on the Mississippi Mass Choir album, which recently went Number 1 on the *Billboard*, *Cashbox*, and Record World gospel charts.


**Dan Pred**, drummer with the Dan Reed Network, currently on the road opening for the Rolling Stones.

For fans of Japanese taiko drumming, the New York-based troupe **Soh Daiko** will be performing the following dates: July 21 at the Obon Festival, Seabrook NJ; August 4 at Lincoln Center Out-of-Doors, Fountain Plaza, Lincoln Center, New York City; November 15 at Golden Auditorium, Queens College, Flushing NY; and November 17 and 18 at the Japan-USA Taiko Festival, Zellerbach Theater, Berkeley CA.



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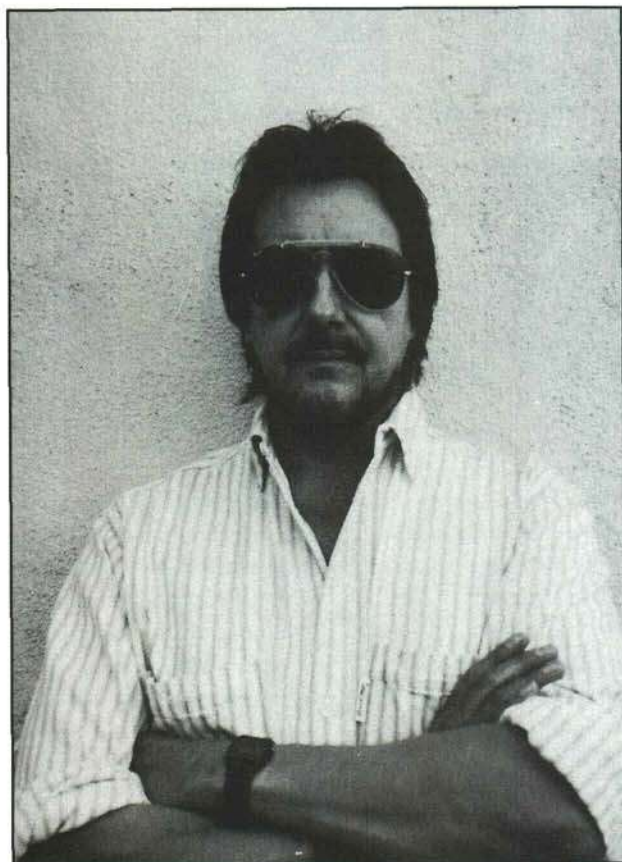
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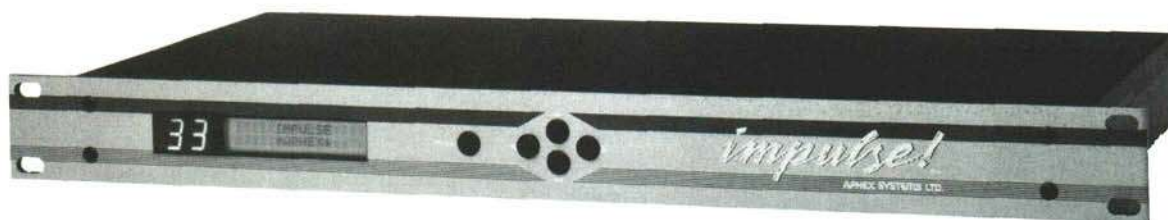
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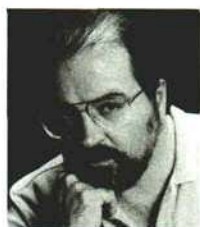
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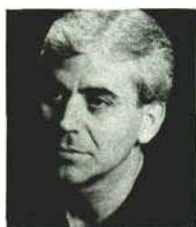
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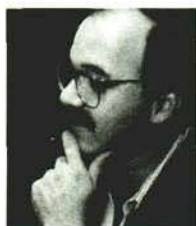
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MD 09/90

continued from page 23

there are only two tunes on the album with horns, the big band element is still there as far as rhythm kicks and setups are concerned. For me, one of the most fun things about playing drums is being able to set up rhythm figures.

"So yeah, it's always been a love of mine," he continues, "and one thing I've always wanted to do with my music is combine that big band element with hip rhythm arrangements and contemporary styles. The first thing everybody thinks about when you say 'big band' is the standard, straight-ahead swing, with visions of 1940s dance floors. It's definitely not that.

"When you're talking about this song in particular," Dave adds, "there was also a lot of inspiration from Michel Camillo. He was always into writing kicks and a lot of hits, and it's that type of thing. But I did take it a little further and used Jerry Hey and Bill Reichenbach to compromise a big horn section. They doubled and tripled parts and made things big.

"I recorded it to synth horns, which are in there as well as the real horns—but the real horns are definitely dominant. So it was a very live feeling of playing with the hits already there. The whole album wasn't recorded that way, but a few of the tunes were, where they were basically put down on a sequencer and made as live-sounding as possible. Then I would play to them, and we would replace the bass parts, horns, and the solos. And Jay actually played a lot of the keyboard parts with me live as we were putting it down, just to get away from the computerized thing as much as possible. With my and everybody else's schedules, that was how we had to do some of the record.

"But I think we captured that excitement and intensity that you feel when you see it live, which is something that is always hard to get across on a record. We were going for that, and I think we achieved it."

In one section of the tune, Weckl solos over a rhythm vamp from the band. "While I wanted it to sound like a drummer's album, I didn't want to have a drum solo on every tune. My and Jay's idea was basically to write tunes with some substance to them and make the music fun to listen to, and if there was a drum solo part—especially in this tune I'm talking about now—to really make it part of the tune. There's one short drum solo in the beginning, and then over a keyboard comp in the middle of the two A sections, and then at the end there are some drum fills around horn hits. So it all

works into being part of the tune.

"I like to do it that way because I think it's more musical. It's more challenging to come up with drum solo ideas around a comp for a number of reasons. There's something going on already, so you have to play with it. You have to make what's already happening make sense, and you have to be able to play it in time enough so that everything goes together. Some may feel it's a bit more confining. I feel it's like a floating carpet, basically. You don't have to totally keep time for yourself and play a solo on top of it. The time is going on, and you can do a real fun thing that I like to stress a lot, which is 'create' space, not 'leave' it. Everybody says, 'Yeah, leave some space.' That's fine, but to me what you are actually doing is intending the space, and space is a real important part of what makes the non-space stick out.

"I would much rather play over something, because as drummers we spend 99.9% of our lives comping for somebody else. So it's nice when the roles are reversed. The term 'drum solo' has always been like, 'Okay, spotlights off on the stage, the drummer has his spot....' which is fine. We're always buried in the back, so it's great when we get our little spotlight and that happens. But musically speaking, especially if it's going down on record, it's always much more musical to play with a comp.

"Of course," Dave says, "we all enjoy those solo spots, too, because it's a challenge. It's not easy to create a piece of music by yourself on an instrument that has no tonality. It's a big challenge to be able to communicate not just to drummers, but to an audience of people who are there to listen to music. I always find the fastest way to communicate is through time. If I play a solo by myself, I may do a coloristic type of opening, but it will generally go into some sort of time feel, something that somebody can move to. I don't want to be the only one having a good time. I want somebody in the audience to be enjoying themselves—and not only the drummers. The communication factor is pretty important."

A tune called "In Common" shows the more coloristic side of Dave's playing. "It was an opportunity for me to do some interesting drum stuff," Weckl says. "At the end of the tune I overdubbed a brush part. That was interesting because I used the piccolo snare drum tuned incredibly high and incredibly muffled. I didn't want any ring at all or any tonality. It was almost like playing on a high-pitched paper box. And it worked the way I wanted it to.

"The groove on this one was actually

harder to play than most, because of the space. I would play the first half of the bar, and some electronics would play the second half and create the total rhythm. So keeping the groove happening for that part of the tune was difficult because I wasn't playing every subdivision. But then the tune goes into a reggaish four-on-the-floor bass drum with a half-time snare drum feel.

"I let the electronics create a lot of the air, which I played live, by the way, with the *Octapad*—the little finger-snap deals and that type of stuff. I could have played a constant groove through that tune, but it wouldn't have had that airy, coloristic quality. This is part playing instead of automatic-pilot playing, where you just play a simple groove. Even though it's airy and coloristic, there's still a lot of involvement with movement and rhythm and repetitiveness. I think part of being a mature player is understanding the importance of repetitiveness in a groove—something that creates almost a hook within the music itself. There are a lot of ways to do it, even with simple hi-hat parts or a cymbal bell that comes on the first 16th of 3 every two bars. The repetitiveness is what makes it a part instead of just a flailing groove."

Two tunes from the album will already be familiar to a lot of Weckl's fans because they appeared on Dave's *Contemporary Drummer + One* package. "I didn't want to touch 'Garden Wall,'" Dave says. "I couldn't have done it any better, and it was perfect for the album. So the only thing we changed on that tune was the bass part, which is now played by Anthony Jackson.

"'Island Magic,' though, I wanted to do a bit differently," Dave continues. "I've been playing that tune for a long time in clinics, so I was just tired of playing it the same way. I did the drum solo around some hits instead of just an open solo. It still goes in and out of 7/8 and 4/4, and is a Latin/salsa kind of thing, but other than that it was totally rearranged. Chick played a different solo on it, the drum part, obviously, was new, Anthony was playing on it, and I overdubbed some timbales."

Along with the drums there are various programmed percussion sounds. Weckl says some of them were done before he recorded the drum part, while others were added afterwards. "I also went back and changed some things," he explains. "For instance, when I put the drumset part down, I played to a sequenced cowbell. But that didn't work when we listened back to it, so I played a live one. It kind of stretched a little more with what I was doing. I was really happy with



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the drum sound we got on this one," Dave adds. "It's a *huge* drum sound. It's pretty natural, but it's big. The tom-toms are massive." And the snare drum was... "The Kent drum, you betcha," Dave smiles.

"Auratune" is a strong mood piece, with an almost jungle-like quality to the drums and percussion sounds. "That's the most commercial, if you will, tune on there," Dave says. "It's almost monotonal, in a way. It just has this mood that I like. There were hi-hat parts and a quarter-note bass drum on machine that I played around, then my bass drum became part of its part. On the second half of the tune, there is more of a full drum part, with snare drum on 2 and 4, and I'm playing around it. It was neat to fit in my part around what was already going on. That was for an effect. It's also got a tinge of 'ooh' and 'ahh' vocals on there for some color, and a muted trumpet—kind of a Miles type of sound—played by Scott Alspoch, another guy from St. Louis. It's a very groove-oriented piece. I didn't really put it on there with thoughts or hopes of airplay. It just had this *thing* about it."

For those who thought that the kind of playing Weckl did with the Chick Corea Akoustic Band was a new experience for him, "Softly As In A Morning Sunrise" shows that drumming of that quality doesn't just come out of nowhere. "That was done completely live with Tommy Kennedy on acoustic bass and Ray Kennedy on acoustic piano, and I'm using an 18" bass drum and a couple of different cymbals," Weckl explains. "We three grew up playing that kind of stuff together, ever since I was 15 years old. Granted, I may not play bebop or straight-ahead like the traditionalists might think is authentic, because there definitely is a tinge of a lot of other things in the way I play that music. But playing straight-ahead jazz was a big part of my youth. And these guys were responsible for a lot of my bebop training; we learned a lot together. So I've always been able to play that style of music, I just haven't had a gig in the last ten years that's allowed me to do it on record to any great extent. Which is okay; I mean, I didn't enter the drumming world to be the best acoustic jazz drummer in the world. But I like to be able to play any style with some degree of authenticity, and play it well. So I wanted to represent that on the album."

When it comes to Weckl's approach to acoustic jazz playing, he credits Jack DeJohnette as being a major influence. "Without tracing roots and going back," Dave says, "talking about *today*, I think Jack is one of the most phenomenal

players ever. I love his looseness and his fluidity and his very musical approach to playing drums, because it just flows. It's not about playing polyrhythms or any mathematical sequences. When he plays, it's just an emotion—a flow that's carried out over the drums. That's how I like to approach that style of music.

"I've had a few people come up to me and say things like, 'Yeah, that thing you were doing was sort of Elvinish or in the

vein of DeJohnette,' which to me is the highest compliment that I could receive, because I had a problem getting out of the big band swing type of feel versus the bebop thing. So I spent a lot of time trying to grasp the bebop concept, and it's a different head. It's almost like Latin music in a way; there's this *feel* to it, the way that it flows. I worked all my life at doing everything as close to perfect as I possibly could, and a lot of this music

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doesn't require that; it requires more of a sloppiness or a looseness. That's not to say that all those guys who play that way are sloppy; that's not the point, because it's a great feel. But it's hard to grasp that concept after you've been working all your life playing perfect single-stroke rolls and perfect double-stroke rolls and all that stuff.

"So yeah, it's something I admire and I like to try to do. Frankly, I've thought I've never really done it well. But I feel that I have gotten better at it over the past few years, primarily just from listening to it and from playing with Chick. It's hard not to progress in that situation.

"But see," Dave continues, "it's hard to maintain the balance of then being able to play with a sequencer, spot on. I came off a year doing the Akoustic Band, and then I tried to play with a sequencer. Believe me, it took a while to get comfortable with it again, and it was quite frustrating, because I was used to being so carefree about tempos and where the time was. Even though the time was always there, there was a looseness factor that allowed it to sway either way. It doesn't work that way when you're playing with a sequencer. So it's hard to maintain the balance."

During that year he spent doing the Akoustic Band, Weckl also recorded an album called *Public Access* with Steve Khan's band, Eyewitness, which has a somewhat looser feel, too. "Well," Dave responds, "there's definitely a looseness factor, but it's still electric; it's still a bit more groove-oriented than straight-ahead. It's just the spaciousness of the ensemble, having only one chord instrument, the guitar. And with Manolo [Badrena], there's less demand on me to maintain all the forward motion. As a drummer without a percussionist, you have to keep the forward motion going. When there's a percussionist, the two of you work together, so it allows the other guy to create some space."

The original drummer with Eyewitness was Steve Jordan, who recorded three albums with the group. He also has co-writing credit on several of the tunes on *Public Access*. Did Jordan's playing with Eyewitness have any influence on Weckl's approach to the group? "Yes and no," Dave answers. "To the new music, not really. To the older stuff, yeah, definitely. The way Steve played it was the way it should have been played. His drum parts were compositionally part of the music, so I would play a lot of the same things. Obviously solos were up for grabs, but with a lot of the drum parts, anything else wouldn't have made sense.

"I was a heavy-duty fan of Eyewitness

when Steve was doing the band," Dave continues, "and it was some of my favorite stuff to listen to. So when Steve Khan asked me to become a part of it when Jordan wasn't available, it was flattering and a lot of fun. Unfortunately, I don't have a lot of time to work with them in live situations, which I'd like to do, but I obviously can't be in two places at once. We didn't really have a chance to play the material on the record live all

that much. We did the *Modern Drummer* festival, and that was it. So we kind of had a better feel for the older music, because I had been listening to it, and it was a little more subject to open playing.

"But the album was a gas, because it was real challenging music," Dave adds. "I think it's some of the best stuff that I've gotten on record. So it was a fun project, and I hope we do get to work together more in the future."

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As much as Weckl had always hoped to work with Eyewitness, there was someone else he dreamed of playing with, and he finally got the chance to do so, first at the Buddy Rich Scholarship Concerts, and then on his album: Steve Gadd. "The title tune of the album, 'Masterplan,'" Dave explains, "was composed by Chick for Steve Gadd and I to do as a duet. That's something I've been dreaming about for the last four or five years,


because Steve was such a major influence and inspiration for me. I've always wanted to get with him and play, and play together—not just 'you first and then me,' but come up with parts and things to do *together*. So Chick came up with this great vehicle. It's sort of Latin-oriented, and it goes through a lot of different sections. There is a trading section of the tune, and we do a little eight-bar thing together to take the tune out.

"For me, it was like a historic event being recreated, because the first time I knowingly ever heard Steve play was on Chick's *Leprechaun* album, and that was recorded in the same studio with Anthony Jackson on bass, who also played on this. There was just such a feeling in that studio that day. Everybody was happy to be there, and I was sick as a *dog*" Dave laughs. "I couldn't even talk; my voice was just gone. I had lasted through the whole record, but we had been working like 16-hour days, and my system had had enough. But I didn't care. It was just so much fun. We had the whole day and evening to rehearse and record this song. It was a 10-page tune, and we spent a lot of time talking about parts and who would do what. It worked out great. It felt so cool to play with him. And it's a playing tune. I'm not laying back and doing nothing.

"It was hard to mix, though. It was hard to get the balances right. We discussed beforehand who was going to do what as far as the voices on the drums. On the melody, I played the cymbals and the groove and Steve was playing rims and stuff like that. Then behind Chick's piano solo, Steve was playing up on top with a lot of cymbals, and I was sort of playing with Chick on cowbells or hi-hats. And then at the end he was still playing a lot of cymbals while I was playing all the bottom stuff. It's one of the most fantastic grooves I've ever heard at the end of the tune. If one drummer could do that, it would be killer. It was just ridiculous it felt so good."

The Chick Corea Elektric Band is performing at a small club where Weckl is set up towards the right-rear of the stage. Between his electronics rack and assorted speakers and monitors, he is hidden from view of about 25% of the audience. You can hear him, though, and the sheer power of his playing permeates the room. No matter how well you think you know his drumming from listening to him on recordings or watching him on video, live there is an impact that those mediums haven't captured.

As you listen to Weckl from a section of the club in which you cannot see him, you start imagining the motions that go with the sounds. And you realize something interesting. From what you are hearing, you can almost imagine Alex Van Halen-type movements coming from the drummer—arms flailing, face contorted, no shirt, body covered with sweat. But when you move to the other side of the club to see if, in fact, Dave Weckl has taken on the appearance of a rock 'n' roll animal, you are reassured to see him



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sitting there fully clothed, looking in control of every stroke. Yes, his jaw is set with a look of intense concentration, there is a trace of perspiration on his brow, and he is obviously putting forth a great deal of physical exertion. And yet.... You are reminded of certain drummers who appear to be playing more than they actually are, simply because their movements are so dramatic. With Weckl, the opposite phenomenon is occurring: He has such tremendous technical control that watching him can almost *reduce* the impact of what he's playing.

It's something that he has become aware of, ever since he began videotaping his performances. "A lot of times," Dave says, "I'll watch myself on tape, and I'm doing these pretty fast things around the drums, but I'm hardly moving. I mean, I've always tried to be as relaxed as possible when I play, but in a certain respect I've probably taken that to another level to where it looks *too* easy. So the actual emotional impact somebody would get from watching it is one of confusion, instead of getting *blasted* by it from the visual.

"Yeah, I don't move a whole lot when I play," Dave continues, "and I've actually been working on making a little more out of some motions to get that impact. Not in the sense of wasting any motion," he hastens to add, "but just to make a little more out of the end of a phrase, or making sure that on a certain accent, I will really accent it and make a bigger motion out of it. I find also that by increasing my dynamic contrast, the motion has to be from nothing to a great deal. And if I overemphasize that, not only does the visual thing come into effect, but the dynamics are greater as well.

"I want to look like I'm in control and that I know what I'm doing, and I also want to be able to come across visually pleasing. You watch some drummers play, and they just don't look right. I think a lot of it has to do with the fact that they've never seen themselves play. And it probably has to do with the fact, quite honestly, that the proper technique is not being used. I say 'proper'; what's that? That's up for debate as well. But let's say something is going on technique-wise that is making the person do something that's visually not pleasing. It doesn't look comfortable or in control of the drumset. I think it's an important aspect. I know from videotaping myself that a lot of things happen in terms of movement that directly affect what I'm playing and how it comes out time-wise. For example, I can look at it and say, 'Man, if I would make more motion out of the 2 and 4, the

backbeat would lay back farther, and it would be bigger and fatter and feel better.' And it would look better.


"I don't want to get off on this whole tangent of how things look, but let's face it, the drummer is in the background to begin with. I mean, I've always been the type of person who, the minute I saw somebody twirl their sticks or do any of that type of stuff, it was like, 'Okay, great,'" Dave says, with an expression

that clearly shows he's not impressed. "I've come to realize, though, that it's part of the show. It's entertaining, man. If you can do it well, it's kind of neat. I'm not planning on twirling any sticks or anything; that's not my thing. I'll leave that up to the Sonny Emorys and Gerry Browns. They can do it incredibly well and not miss a stroke. I've always had a more business-like approach to the drumkit. But in a lot of respects, it's

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boring to watch that. It's like, 'C'mon, *do something.*' you know? So yeah, I'm kind of working on trying to make a little bit more out of the visual to go along with the music—but to reiterate, never to obstruct the music."

While there certainly are musicians who seem to put more emphasis on the visual than on the musical, one senses that Dave Weckl will never be guilty of that particular sin. At the same time, attending a live performance is a visual experience as well as an aural one, and the two elements should complement each other. That message comes through strongly on two clips of Buddy Rich that appear on the video of the Buddy Rich Memorial Scholarship Concert, on which Weckl also appears. "Yeah," Dave agrees, "you watch some older Buddy clips, man, there are a lot of strokes in there that are definitely show strokes. I don't care what anybody says. You notice when he got older he didn't do those anymore; he didn't waste any motion whatsoever. But the old stuff with the left-hand roll and the right hand up in the air—I mean, it looked great and it made a point that, 'Yeah, I'm doing this with one hand,'" Dave says, laughing at Rich's sheer audacity. "Hitting underneath the cymbals and the whole deal was kind of a flashy, entertaining thing. I never really paid a lot of attention to that part of it, but there is definitely something to be said for it. This is the entertainment

business, you know. I mean, this all goes along with playing the drums to the best of your ability.

"That's why, when I do a solo on stage," Dave adds, "and it's nothing else but drums, I'll always go back to simplicity so I can grab a few people. I'll start playing something that grooves. And the contrast between that and something flashy, if you will, or a phrase that happens to have a lot of fast strokes in it, makes that stuff stick out that much more, and it always gets a reaction. It's not like I'm up there just trying to evoke response all the time. I'm trying to say something musically. But it's a great way to create interest in the audience, which is the whole point. You can sit there and play single-stroke rolls for five minutes and you're not going to impress too many people. They might be impressed by the simple fact of the technical display, but as far as them getting an emotional feeling out of it.... Most people nowadays want to be able to groove to it. And if I can get them to do that—if I can get them in there with me—I can pull some of the other stuff off and put the chops on for a second and kind of keep everyone happy. It's contrast; it's always about contrast, no matter what you're doing. It's always the difference between one thing and another that will evoke a response."

Besides Weckl's lack of movement sometimes reducing the visual impact of what he's doing, his technical mastery

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and flawless execution can almost give the impression that a lot of what he plays is pre-planned, or that he has worked out specific polyrhythmic patterns that he can call on at a moment's notice. You don't necessarily get the impression that Dave is simply going for it with wild abandon. But in truth, he often is.

"I like to give the impression that things are executed like I want them to be," he says. "When it's a matter of playing an exact groove or a less complex fill, you might say I'm able to think about exactly what I'm going to play a few seconds before I do it, or that as I'm doing it I'm able to concentrate on each stroke. But in a lot of instances, especially in the acoustic stuff, a lot of that is just sort of throwing the hands out there and leaning on accents. In other words, maybe the accents are the only pre-planned thing of the phrase or fill or solo, and all the color and sound in between the accents is just that.

"It's not a predetermined number of strokes," Dave stresses, "and it's never a predetermined polyrhythm—groups of fives or sevens or nines or whatever—because I just don't play that way. To me, it's too mathematical to play like that; it becomes a little bit less musical. I can usually tell by listening to a guy if he's playing loose phrasings or if he's doing mathematics on the drums. It does make a difference to me.

"There is a lot more risk factor

involved when you don't pre-plan things," Dave contends. "Some might consider it an easy way out, but in one respect it's harder because you're taking more of a chance. Whereas with the polyrhythms and the predetermined amount of strokes, there's never a chance. You either hit it or you miss it, and I would hate to see what would happen if you miss it.

"See, my mind is working in a way where everything I do is around the given quarter note or given time signature, and I'm purely phrasing over bar lines, knowing exactly where the quarter notes and beats are at all times. So even if I mess up, I can usually turn it into something else without getting lost or screwing something up. It creates a bit more tension because the feeling of, 'Is he going to make it or not?' stands out a little more. It's that looseness, that non-predetermined feeling, that creates that emotion. To me, the other way is sort of emotionless by comparison. It's spectacular for what it is, but it doesn't hit me in the heart like it does when it's just an emotional thing."

A couple of years ago, Weckl performed a tune called "Sausalito" on a recording by the S.O.S. All Stars. It was basically a drum feature, and a suggestion was made to Dave to transcribe his part, which would be printed in *Modern Drummer*. At first he was open to the idea, but then he

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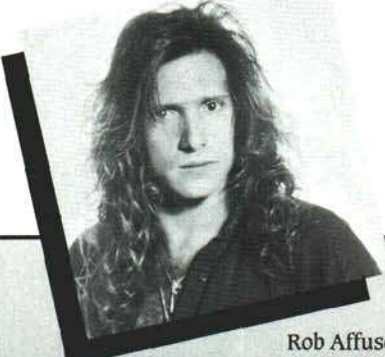
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decided against it. "Number one," Dave explains, "the thing I hate most in life is transcribing my own playing," he says, breaking into a laugh. "That particular instance, though, the biggest reason was that I couldn't see the point of transcribing something that required all of this electronic stuff, which maybe a very small percentage of the kids could afford to have. I did it for an effect on an album, basically because I had the equipment to do it, and I wanted a real percussive type of thing. So I was triggering cowbells on bass drums and all kinds of stuff.

"Electronics is a touchy subject because the first and foremost point that kids should get is that you have to be able to play acoustic drums first. And that's *it*, bottom line. Everybody gets the impression that the minute you surround yourself with a very happening electronics setup, all of a sudden you're going to be God on the drums and everything will take care of itself. It's such a misconception. I don't know how many times I've said, and will continue to say, that electronics are purely an enhancement to what you do. They allow certain emotions to be conveyed that can't be done with acoustic drums alone. For me, they never take the place of acoustic drums, and they don't make it easier, because in a lot of respects they make it harder. Technique has to be that much better and that much cleaner so that you're not double triggering or setting things off that you don't want to be setting off. There's no sloppiness involved when you're triggering electronics.

"So that was the big reason I didn't want to get into transcribing anything that used electronics. The important thing is learning how to play the drums. Electronics are such a personal thing anyway. You can sit in the audience and say, 'Man, that's a happening electronics setup,' and you can come up and sit behind my set and think it's the worst because of the way it triggers, the way the electronics react to stick response, and the way that I have it set up. A lot of people say, 'So what are you using?' It's almost ridiculous for me to tell you what I'm using because for someone else to get the same electronics setup, I will almost guarantee it's not going to work the same way. I went through so many experiments and trials with different triggers, different mountings, different settings on the samplers—so many variables it's ridiculous."

And for those who do want to copy Weckl's electronics, good luck finding a Simmons SDS V in 1990. "Yeah, that

too," Dave agrees. "The good old Simmons; I can't get rid of those. Analog sounds, and it's totally manual. I'm messing around with those things all the time in the middle of the show. So that kind of puts a little bit of spontaneity back into the electronics," he laughs. "It's not too easy to adjust a sample in the middle of a tune. You're kind of stuck with it."

"That's why on the videos I didn't get near the electronics. If I was going to do a video purely on electronics, then that would be another story. Then I would say, 'Here's my electronics setup, and this is the way that I use it. But that doesn't mean it's going to work for you.'"

The last time Dave Weckl appeared in an *MD* cover story, he was being referred to as "the next guy." Since then, most people have dropped the word "next" from his description, and you can even hear people speculating about who will be "the next Weckl." Some musicians have a problem dealing with that type of adulation. After reading reviews that praised the rock group Cream, guitarist Eric Clapton felt that the group couldn't possibly live up to people's expectations of them. Closer to home, so to speak, Rush drummer Neil Peart has spoken in these pages about experiencing a similar feeling the first time he won a *Modern Drummer* Readers Poll. Has Weckl ever experienced emotions such as these?

"I've never gone through that," Dave replies, "and I don't think I ever will, because I never take any of it that seriously. Winning a lot of these polls is sometimes a matter of how much you're visible. The more visible you are, the more people are going to be exposed to you, and possibly like what you do, and you're going to get voted for. It's not to say that it's not deserved, or that the person getting the vote can't play."

"Personally, I know I'm not ever going to let anybody down, because I've never done anything dishonest or said anything that would make anybody expect something out of me that I can't do. I've always been straightforward with everything, and the stuff I do on record obviously is not a lie, so it's not even a second thought that I'm going to go out on stage and not do it the same or better. Hopefully I've gotten better since that's been recorded."

"No, my whole thing is that I'm there to try to communicate what I do in the music and make people happy. I'm not there to get points from a judge to see how I did that night. As long as I'm up there making an honest effort to play as well as I can, I don't see it ever being

disappointing to anybody. And if it is, well, everybody has their own opinions. I don't expect to be able to please everybody. I'm sure there are some people who don't like the way I play, which is cool. It's just a matter of this is what I do, this is what I've always done, and I'm not trying to offend anybody who doesn't like it."

"So it's real simple. I've never had a problem with stage fright. I've never been terrified about being able to live up to any


reputation. Because my whole thing is, number one, I don't think that much about the reputation, and number two, I just want to get better. I videotape myself and watch it to better myself, to see what I'm doing up there, because I'm not going to sit up there for one minute and think that I've reached some level, and now I can stop. Because the minute you stop that, you stop growing, period."



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continued from page 27

the bill with Chico Freeman, and he invited me to come down to the gig. Philly Joe was on the bill, too. Man, seeing him play was captivating. There was just *so* much! He'd do things like take the stick and play both sides of the cymbal, one-handed. And he would just hook up all the rudiments. Everybody tells you when you're younger, "Learn your rudiments; it's so important." And you sit down and learn all those things and you think, "Now how in the hell is this gonna help me out? I don't hear this stuff being played at all." But with Philly Joe, I could see it all. There was no mistake: That's a flam, that's a press roll, that's a ratamacue. He was hooking it all up so slick, and it was so musical, man.

**BM:** You got to be close friends with both Billy Hart and Billy Higgins. Would they ever critique your playing or give you feedback?

**WH:** When I'd hang out with Billy Hart, we wouldn't talk about music. We'd talk about life more than anything. He'd tell me certain things about ways to approach a problem. But he and I had been really close for quite a while before he actually heard me play. I don't think he really heard me until I got in the band with Betty Carter. He just heard me at a clinic doing some solos.

With Billy Higgins, we'd mainly talk about life. Now and then he'd show me some things with brushes. The person who probably tells me more about playing than anyone is Kenny Washington. We'll get together and he'll say, "Check this out. You can play with the brushes this way."

Max, every now and then, will drop something on me and tell me why it's done a certain way. I was doing this gig once, playing brushes behind a singer, and Max said, "Yeah, you really sound good. You play brushes well, but try playing the brushes with the snares off." I asked him why and he said, "That's what Kenny Clarke and Papa Jo told me. You really get a chance to hear the brushes that way." I also remember one time Billy Hart telling me that not everybody has the same beat. Somebody might be playing right on the beat, somebody might be just a hair in front of it, somebody might be playing a little bit behind it. So you have to know that and find out where that is, so you can find some kind of way to make all of that lock up. Just knowing who you are playing with helps. You listen to certain bass players, and you can hear where they place the beat. So you have to find some kind of

compromise as to where the beat is going to be, so you can lock and really set a pocket. I do my best to try to make the adjustment when I'm playing with different bass players. And that's what I always liked about Billy Hart. I could see him in different situations, and he would always fit with each situation.

**BM:** Was Betty Carter demanding about where the beat hit?

**WH:** Oh yeah, of course. She lets you know what she wants, and then you have to work and study to find out how to get that, to make that work. Her whole approach is so rhythmic. A strong drummer on that gig makes the gig happen. The key is to just keep swinging and keep your eyes on her, watch for cues. And if you're right there on her, right under her, you can take her wherever she wants to go. Then after a while on that gig, you get to know her body language. You come to know her so well that you know what's going to happen. You know when you should be here or be there. You learn how to give her the support she needs.

**BM:** How did you get that gig with Betty?

**WH:** I went to see her once at Blues Alley in D.C. Curtis Lundy was the bassist in the band at the time, and I went out to hang with Curtis. He introduced me to Betty, but I didn't think any more of it afterward. Then I was hanging out with Kenny Washington one day and he said, "You know, that gig with Betty Carter—man, that's a good gig for a drummer. You should take it." And even with that, I didn't think any more of it. Meanwhile, I did a week with Dexter Gordon in Philadelphia and then a short tour of Europe with Johnny Griffin, after which I moved to New York. I already knew enough people in New York, so I felt like I had one foot in the door. I started working with Ted Curson at the Blue Note jams and later worked with Walter Bishop, Jr., who introduced me to one of his students, Benny Green. Benny already had the gig as pianist in Betty's band, and when Lewis Nash left her group, Benny recommended me to replace him. Betty called me up for a rehearsal, so I went by her place and did some playing with her, and I got the gig.

**BM:** What was it she liked about your playing?

**WH:** My energy level. Betty has a lot of energy, and so do I. I think we had the same approach. When we got out on stage, we didn't know if there was gonna be a tomorrow. You were going to give everything you had *tonight*. Tomorrow's another day. And I like that attitude. After you've been in her band for a while, you notice that your stamina goes up because

she does long sets—very long sets. I think the longest set I did with her was three and a half hours. It was the last night of an engagement in San Francisco, and before we went on she said, "Look, we're only gonna do one set tonight, and it's gonna be a long one, so y'all better be ready."

**BM:** What did you learn from that gig?

**WH:** I learned a lot about music and about business. I knew I was going to get to a point where I would want to run my own band, and I knew that she had practically produced herself for years. At that time, she was running her own label, so I wanted to know how to go about doing that. In terms of the music, I think my playing got more tactful. I tried to work on finesse, playing with brushes, playing with dynamics, playing soft. She really helped me in that area. I was also getting a chance to play less common time signatures. We were doing things in 5/4 and 7/4 and 3/4.

Betty would give us a lot of advice on our playing, even though she never played an instrument herself. But she would say things like "Check this out" or "Work on this." And sometimes you might not understand her because she didn't always communicate in musical terms. Sometimes it was through analogies or colors. I remember we were playing a 3/4 thing one time and she said, "Well, I want this 3/4 to be a lilt." And everybody had to think about that. She had a way of talking to you like that. It was very sensuous, very feminine. I liked it. It made me respect that side of things, because the way females look at things is very important. They have a tendency to look much deeper sometimes than men do. That was one thing she taught me. She'd say, "You always have to be aware of and respect how women feel about this music." And it makes sense.

**BM:** Do you feel that your playing improved after those three and a half years with Betty?

**WH:** Most definitely. It was my first major road gig. We were working a lot in the States as well as in Europe. Going into that band, I didn't have a whole lot of time to learn the music. I hadn't heard much Betty Carter when I was growing up in Atlanta, and I had two weeks to learn all the material before our first gig in Canada. And there's no music, man—no charts for the drummer at all. That's a lot of stuff to learn. So I had to go in there and learn it all by ear. I would record all our rehearsals and then go back home and play them back at night to learn the arrangements. I'd set up the drums and sit down and play to those tapes all night, so by the time we got back

to rehearsal the next day, I'd have it down. For that first gig I did with her in Canada, I did pretty well. I did well enough where she took me out to dinner. It was her way of saying, "Yeah, I was proud of you tonight." So I always made a habit of taping most of the gigs I did with her and listening back to them at night, just so I could learn how to play this music better. And over the course of three and a half years, I did improve considerably.

**BM:** Did your kit change at all during those years?

**WH:** When I first got in the band, I was playing an old Slingerland set I had in Washington D.C. It had an 18" bass drum, a 16" floor tom, a 12" tom, and a snare—just those four pieces and cymbals. Shortly after I joined, I changed the ride cymbal. There was a certain sound she wanted, and I had to find the right cymbals. We were doing a tour out in California, and I met Steve Christian, who at the time was representing Istanbul cymbals. So I went by the factory, played some of the cymbals, and particularly liked this one flat ride. It had a nice sound, so I brought it back on the gig and she noticed the change right away. She said, "Man, I really like that cymbal." So I ended up endorsing Istanbul cymbals. Then in Europe while on tour with Betty, I got a set of Sonor

drums. They were always a favorite of mine as a kid, but they were so expensive that I figured I'd never be playing them. That's like having a Rolls Royce. But at this festival I got my first chance to play Sonors, and afterwards I talked to the guy from the company and got an endorsement. I ended up with a *Sonorlite* set, with an 18" bass drum, a 14" floor tom, and 10" and 12" toms. I've been using those ever since.

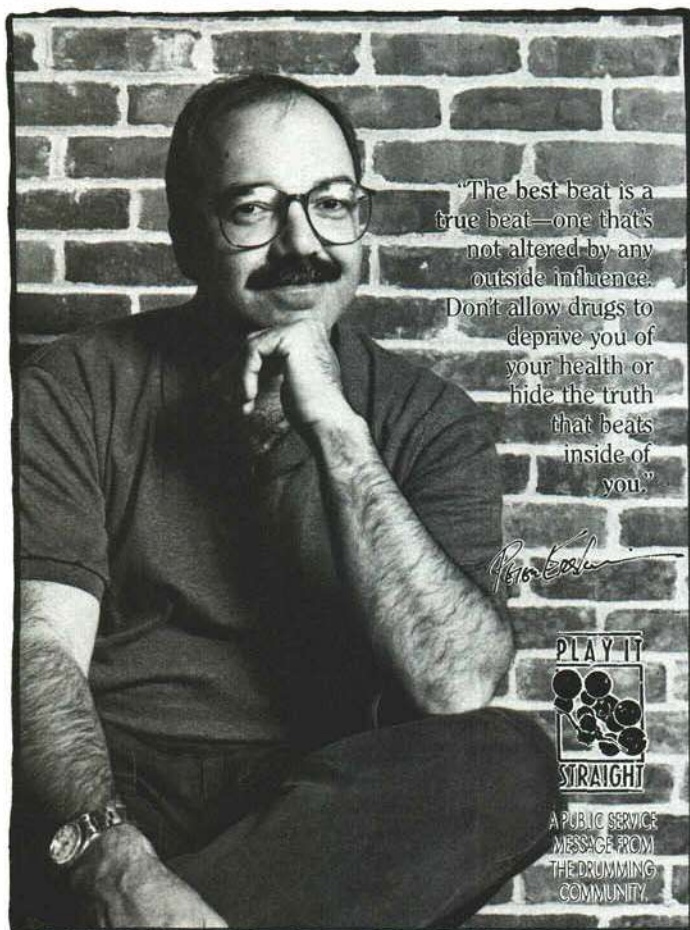
**BM:** Are you still playing the Istanbul cymbals?

**WH:** No, I played them for a while; the flat ride was especially cool. You could hear nothing but stick. And those cymbals sound really good on the two recordings I made with Betty. But the company went defunct, and you couldn't get them for a while. And my needs were changing. Even while I was working with Betty during that period, I was also keeping my own quintet working. I didn't feel like that flat ride was projecting enough to cut through the two horns [brother Philip on trumpet and Justin Robinson on alto sax]. Very recently, I've hooked up with Sabian cymbals. I have a few of the *Sound Control* cymbals, the ones where the edge is turned up a little bit. It gives me the sound that I need to cut through, but not overpower the band. So I have an 18" HH crash on the left

side, a 20" ride with three rivets in it, an 18" Chinese cymbal, then another 20" ride cymbal, an HH light ride with three rivets, and to my far right I use an 8" splash. I also added a couple of Remo *Spoxe* to my kit. I have a 5" one and another that's 8". They make a bell-like sound, which is a really nice effect. I actually got them when I was playing in Abdullah Ibrahim's band for a while. His music is quite different, so I needed some other colors.

As for sticks, when I was back in D.C., I used Vic Firth *SD-4 Combo* sticks. After joining Betty Carter's band, I switched to *SD-11 Slammers*. They give a more controlled, more direct stick sound. You don't get as many overtones on the cymbal. The triangular bead gives more of a stick sound. I also use Regal Tip brushes and Vic Firth mallets.

Recently I've been using calfskin heads on my snare. Connie Kay turned me on to that. We were on a flight to South America with Betty's band and Billy Taylor and the Modern Jazz Quartet. I got to talking with him, and he was telling me about calfskin heads. So I put a couple on, and I really liked the way they felt. I was amazed. The drum just started to feel personal. I don't know what it is, but it gives a whole new meaning to the snare, especially for brush playing. It's

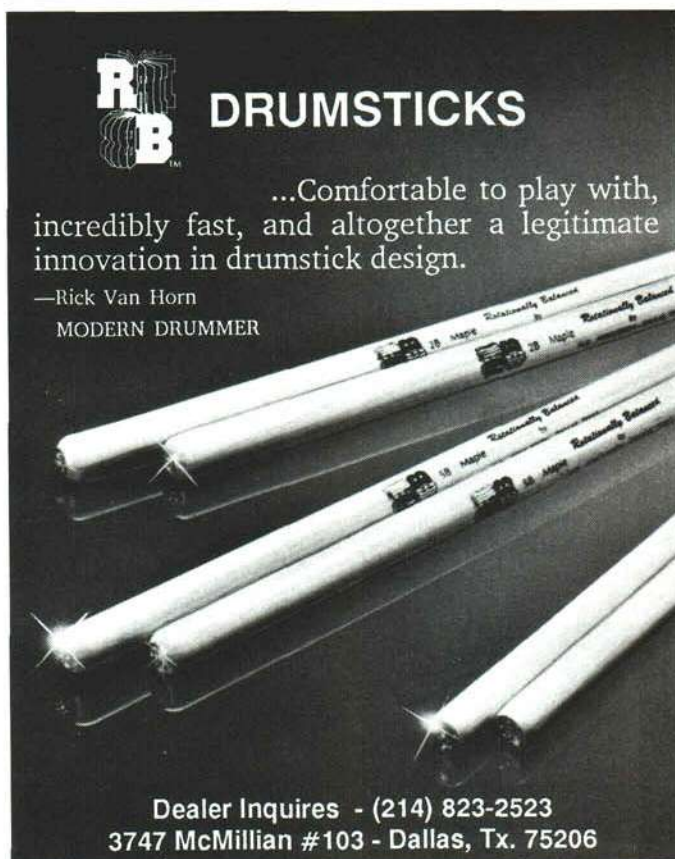


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**BM:** Getting back to your playing experience, earlier you mentioned Abdullah Ibrahim. What was the challenge of that gig?

**WH:** Since he's from South Africa, he has a different feel in his music than, say, Betty Carter does. I first heard him at the Apollo Theatre. I was working there with Betty, and he came on behind us. The music was pretty, nice, very different than what I was used to. Then I saw him again later at a festival, and he mentioned to me that he was looking for a drummer. When the band came in to Sweet Basil's for a week, I went down to check them out. The music was very intricate and different. It reminded me of gospel music. I grew up playing gospel in Atlanta, and that was something I missed doing. So I made some rehearsals with him. I really wanted to do the gig because I knew that Billy Higgins makes that gig sometimes. So I learned the music, but it took me a while to find out how to play it. Playing drums with Abdullah Ibrahim is really about setting a foundation, finding the groove so that everything else can set like it should. Once in a while he'll throw in "Off Minor" or some other Monk tune, but not too often. Mostly you're doing his originals. And I remember it was

[saxophonist] Sonny Fortune who helped me get a hold on that gig. He told me, "Think of it like you're given these boundaries, and you have to deal within those boundaries, excel within those boundaries. This music is like the music that came out of Motown. You're gonna have to make this stuff groove." And once he told me that, I had a better understanding. From that point on, I was able to do the gig much better. I continued to work with him off and on for my last year and a half with Betty, juggling the two as best I could.

**BM:** What was your concept for the Harper Brothers when you began gigging?

**WH:** I just wanted to play music and feel good and be happy. That was the most important thing to me. I started the band in D.C. At the time, there weren't a lot of opportunities for the younger musicians around town to play. So I felt like we had to make our own opportunities. Philip was still finishing high school down in Atlanta and would come up on spring break and on weekends. The nucleus of the band at that time was me, Philip, and an alto player named Roger Woods, who I used to play in the street with a lot. We had different bass players and piano players. The five of us would go to jam sessions and try to sit in together and call

tunes that we had rehearsed. People would tell us, "Wow, sounds good. Y'all sound like a band."

I finally was able to get us a gig at this place in D.C. called Mister Wise. He was the only guy in town who would take a chance. We made up some fliers, put them all over town, had a good turnout, played good music, and everybody enjoyed it, but the clubowner didn't pay us all our money. But, you know, we had fun playing. Well, somebody must've passed along word to the guys at the One Step Down, because they finally decided to give us a weekend shot that summer. That was really our big showcase. The One Step usually brought in guys from New York like Pepper Adams, Buck Hill, Clifford Jordan, Barry Harris—so you know this was important to us. They ended up selling out both nights. They had to turn people away. That's how well things went. And from that point on I thought, "Yeah, this is something that can work."

The thing was, we had fun playing together. We played with such feeling that people enjoyed it. And that was very important to me. I always loved the Cannonball Adderley Quintet, the band with Sam Jones on bass, Louis Hayes on drums, Yusef Lateef on tenor sax, and whoever the piano player was at the



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time—Joe Zawinul, Victor Feldman, Bobby Timmons, Barry Harris. They always played with such feeling; I could listen to them all day long. And that's the way I wanted this band to be.

**BM:** How did the band change once you got to New York and landed that gig at Pat's?

**WH:** The first band had Ralph Moore on tenor sax, Charnett Moffett on bass, and Benny Green on piano. Then Don Braden came in on tenor and Michael Bowie on bass. And after Don went with Wynton, we got Justin Robinson. Then Benny left and Stephen Scott came in, and Kiyoshi Kitagawa replaced Michael Bowie on bass. Our latest lineup has Kevin Hays on piano and Eric Lemon on bass. So the band has changed, but that same feeling is always there. I'm hoping that this will become an institution, like a Betty Carter or an Art Blakey. We'll be a band and be around. Guys can come through, play for a few years, and then go on to something different.

**BM:** What percentage of your set is original material at this point?

**WH:** It's about 50/50. It all depends on what we feel like doing that set. We might play some Sam Jones stuff or some Hank Mobley stuff first, or we might just come out with an original number. I look at the audience and think, "What's gonna work here?" Because the first thing I want to do is capture their attention. That was what Cannonball was about. Gene Harris told me one night, "I always used to ask Cannonball, 'Why do you play 'Mercy Mercy' every night?' And Cannon said, 'Because after I do that, then I can play whatever the hell I want to—because I've got 'em. They're in my car, and if they're in my car, then I can drive 'em away.'" And that's the way I feel about the music. I love to entertain and be entertained. I spend a lot of my time going to see other people play. I check out how the audience responds. I want people when they leave my gig to feel like they've been taken somewhere, that they've gotten something. And before you can take 'em for that ride, you have to capture their attention, get them into your car.

**BM:** What tune works best for you to capture their attention?

**WH:** For a while, we were using this tune we recorded on the first album, Lee Morgan's "Mogie." I don't know what it is about that tune, but people just seemed to get excited when we played it. And we all felt good about playing it. It was just something that happened naturally, a good ice-breaker. Occasionally, we'll open with an original of Philip's called "Yang." It's an exciting tune that captures people's attention.

**BM:** On your solo on "Yang" from *Remembrance*, you start off playing the shells, then you move to the toms, and you keep coming up with surprises for the listener. Is this something you worked out, or was it improvised?

**WH:** To be very honest with you, I can't even remember my solo on that song. I think it came out alright, but I think my solos on tapes of other live things are much better, because there's no pressure from trying to make a time limit. We were

very conscious of bringing everything within a certain time on that live record. I was also worrying about the band sounding good, so I guess I didn't really take the time to do the kind of things that I really like to do on the bandstand. But I guess my approach to soloing is a lot like Papa Jo, Philly Joe, Billy Higgins—just make it musical and have fun. That's the way I like to play, trying to build and develop and tell a story, or color things a little differently. I always liked the

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creativity of Billy Hart and the unorthodox approach of Papa Jo. And Billy Higgins—to me, he doesn't just play the hell out of the drums, he plays the hell out of the music. So does Kenny Washington. And I always strive to get to that point where you know the melody well enough that you know how to color it or embellish it or double a line or give it that push and that lift that it needs.

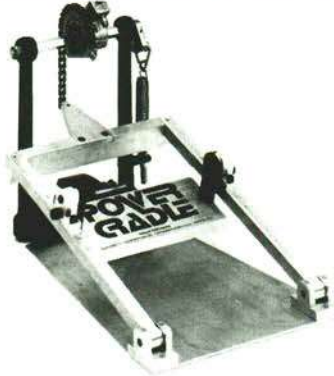
**BM:** You were a teenager at the height of the fusion movement. Were you ever attracted to that style of drumming?

**WH:** I have to be honest with you, I wasn't. I checked out some things that Billy Cobham and Lenny White did, but like I said, my hero was Billy Higgins. I guess everyone has their calling in life, and that was mine. When I put on those Lee Morgan records and heard Billy Higgins playing, I felt like those cats were saying to me, "Hey Winard, *this* is the shit!" I could really feel his spirit coming through those records. To this day, when I hear something on the radio, I can tell it's Billy Higgins. I know it right away. I know his playing. You know, there are certain cats...you just know it's Philly Joe, you just know it's Papa Jo. I can feel that. I don't know, maybe in another life I was there at that time. Betty used to tell me, "If you were living back then, you would've done well. You have that kind of

attitude." I'm just attracted to that time, those cats, the way they played, the way they carried themselves. It's always what I wanted to do, to be like them. It's my calling.



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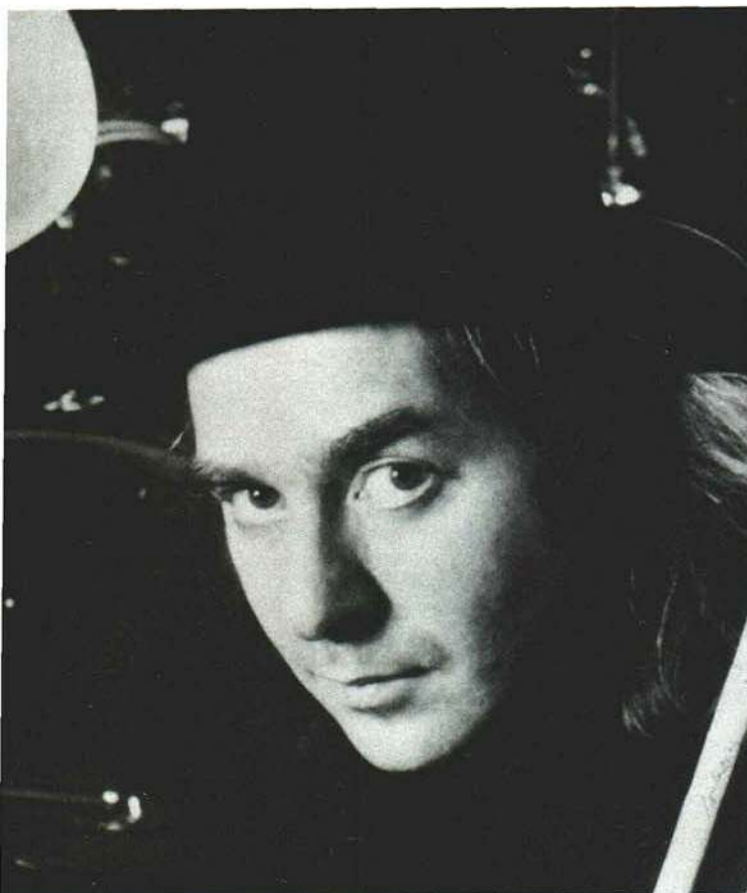
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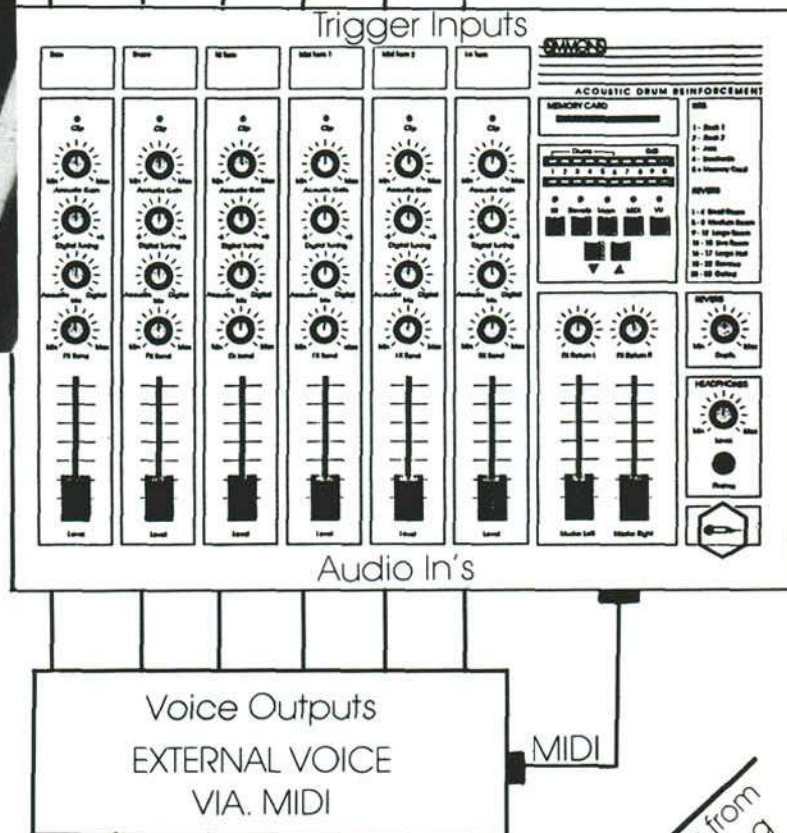
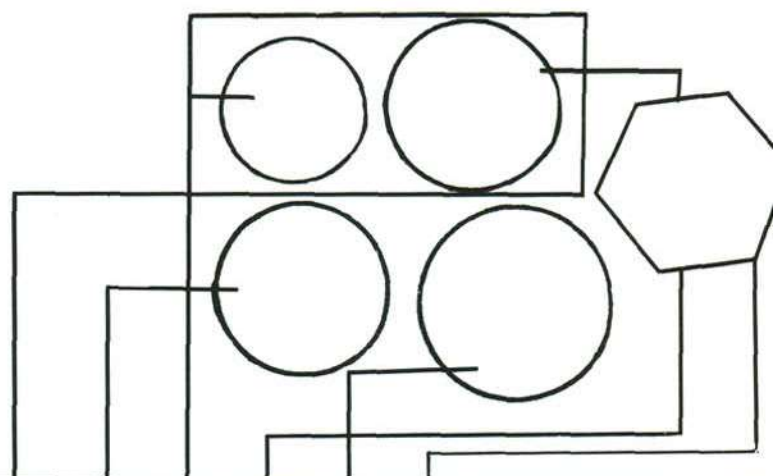
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continued from page 30

drums that they make, with the head pulled over it like a timpani head. I'd seen Zildjian clinics in Windsor and London with Mel Gaynor and Simon Phillips, and they both had used one, but they always seemed quite flappy to me. But if you put an *Ambassador* on it, and get a real low note out of it, it can work quite well. I had the idea that when you roll around on the toms, instead of ending up on the cymbal, you end on this really resonant low note—much more attuned to Balinese music or something. Anyway, that sort of ended up somewhere around low C, and I found that then the kit almost came out in octaves. The middle tom would be a high C, and then a higher tom is like an E or an E flat, and then on to D and F. It slightly altered on different songs. On the last Siouxsie & the Banshees tour, for *Peepshow*, I was tuning a lot between songs, maybe bumping things just a half step—not to specific notes, but just to what sounded right.

**AB:** The toms in your basic kit are pretty big.

**Budgie:** They're power toms as well. I'm considering that they're maybe on the large side. Just really experiencing them for the last year, I think they have a really great sound, but I think I'd like something a bit quicker in response. The nice thing about having the opportunity to choose what you want is being able to choose a whole rack of small toms. I began to use them in addition to my basic kit. They come in 8", 9", 10", 11", 12", and 13" sizes. It's hard to get a 9" head, but this way there's no gap in the interval. I'd have five of these toms rack-mounted up to my left. I even tuned these to some kind of a Chinese scale, a weird kind of Eastern scale. I've got a piccolo snare to the left of me, which I've always used as a second snare or with the snares off. I would also have another floor tom behind that, which I put an Evans *Hydraulic* head on, which is kind of "doojg"—you know, that Evans flap. So I'd have this kind of very tight, kind of Eastern thing, and then this "doojg"—so again it's that similar kind of thing to having the gong drum on the other side of the kit. I'd have a remote hi-hat back there as well, plus a Tama double kick on the one kick drum. So what I could do was swivel around and put my right foot on the left pedal of the double bass pedal, put my left foot on the remote hi-hat, and use a second kit. Now, that worked great for the live show, but it's quite difficult in rehearsal situations and when you want to move quickly. It's a hell of a lot of gear to set up. So I've

recently limited it down to kind of a basic, five-tom kit. And now we are getting more into the realm of sampling and pads, which I started getting more into on the last tour with the Banshees. I've already sampled all the small toms, and I've gotten *Octapads*, so rather than having this one huge kit, I can have several other kits.

**AB:** When you went to Spain to record *Boomerang*, I would imagine you didn't want to carry too much stuff around.

**Budgie:** Actually, I took the whole lot. That was one of the reasons for going to Spain. When we went to Hawaii to record the first *Creatures* album, we flew off with a pair of drumsticks, and that was it. So we had to hire everything in Hawaii. We also hadn't done a lot of preparation for that first album. This time I had been doing a lot of writing ahead of time; we spent seven days figuring out rhythms and beats—not specifically songs, but ideas for vocal melodies and drum patterns, rhythm box patterns with drums on top. I'd used the full extent of all this equipment on the music I'd been working on, so I had to take it with me. We had to go somewhere in Europe so that we could transport it all, and Spain had a lot of things that we were familiar with or that we thought we'd like to investigate further. We had always been aware of Spanish film directors, versions of *Carmen* and the power of the Flamencan dance troupes—the brilliant syncopation of the beat, the clapping.

**AB:** You did a little recording of that for the song "Manchild."

**Budgie:** We got some of the young kids from the local ballet school in Jerez, which is where we ended up recording the album. That was a good experience, but it was a difficult one as well. We couldn't all have individual headphones, so we had to have an open speaker at the side, just playing the rhythm box track. So they weren't really aware of the format of the song. I was singing the song to myself and trying to conduct them. There was the language barrier as well: "Que, que?" "Si, si." It was pretty frustrating, and it all had to be done very quickly. We really enjoyed it though. They thought I was a bit crazy. We were able to communicate, mostly by signs. Mike, Siouxsie, and I were the only ones who spoke English, and that had a lot of effect on the final outcome of the record as well. We didn't have a lot of conversation; we did have a lot of time to think.

One of the reasons we recorded in Jerez is because it is in the area of Andalucia where the Flamencan dance troupe La Cumbre Flamenca is from. Before we left we had seen a performance

of theirs. One of the dancers, an old lady of about 80 years old, was the grandame of the troupe. Their performance was variations on every possible angle they could take with two acoustic guitars, walking sticks—which they would bang on the floor—and their dancing. She did this thing where she would come to the front of the stage, doing this very loud thing, and suddenly it would come down to just a whisper. She would just be doing this heel-to-toe movement, and the noise was like the best double-stroke roll you've ever heard. And then she just shifted her weight to the other foot without interrupting a thing. The whole place was just hushed. And she had this stern face just glaring out, like, "I am totally in control," and then she just brought it all up to a crescendo again. The hairs stood up on the back of my neck. I suddenly realized that that was so humbling. So much of what we see around today is kind of geared for show and is so much macho bravado.

**AB:** Especially in drumming...

**Budgie:** Drumming is a very physical thing, yeah. This was very physical, but very *sex-less*. It didn't matter that she was a woman, she was a *strong person*. And it was so simple. It really hit you how you don't need all the excess; it was pure control, and it was just the right amount of delivery. I just think it's so important. It's like when I saw a clinic with Peter Erskine. He held everybody captivated for an hour or so, and all he was doing—"all he was doing," I say—*what* he was doing was "ding dinga ding dinga ding," and all the permutations. Every other limb was doing something different, while the hand was still going "ding dinga ding dinga"...and I'm just going, "How is he doing this?" [laughs] But he just taught you the same thing. I mean I'm sure with other groups he has played *at* people, but I think something you learn in time is economy. And I think coming from that experience and then going to Spain.... You see, where we were working was on a working ranch, where people were simple farmers who worked the land every day. You suddenly realize that their lives are so important. I know now that they are still there today, while I'm sitting here in New York doing an interview; they're out there waiting for the sun to be in the right place so they can harvest or whatever. And that really brought me down to some different place; I needed that. It was like a recharging, to realize how above your station you must not get.

**AB:** Do you think that attitude worked itself into the music?

**Budgie:** I think so. Because it certainly wasn't like we went out trying to find a lot

of flamenco guitar players or the local percussionist: "Hey, come along and jam." It was really a place to go and connect all our ideas together and make something that was personal; it helped us to find an expression.

The conditions were almost totally against us, though. We were in a stone barn about 40'x60', and it was like this cacophonous sound. I had one drum sound—loud! That was it. There was very little control over it. We recorded the whole thing on a PZM with a parabolic reflector sitting above my kit, behind my head. If I was using the snare and toms primarily, then we could close-mike those. But if I hit anything else, then we just used close ambience. And then anything further away from that just sounded like it was 60' away. So we had to devise new techniques; make it up as we went along. And we were using a 16-track mobile desk, with no Dolby, so automatic drop-ins were out of the question.

**AB:** How did you go about choosing that sort of equipment?

**Budgie:** Mike Hedges told us about the quality you get with a 16-track. Rather than spreading 24 tracks out on a 2" tape, you're only dealing with 16. Plus the desk was primarily designed for recording classical music performances. We were able to do compression between the channels, so we could put everything down to two channels and then compress that to the next one, and then pass it on—in theory at least. You get a very warm compression with the desk itself, much more so than any outboard compressors you could bring in.

Now, that was the plus side of it. The thing is that this board had probably never been used in as harsh an environment as the central plains of Spain, where it's dusty and hot, and the amps couldn't cope with it. We had to make leads up as we were going along. Mike was doing a lot of wiring, a lot of engineering. We ended up using about 18 days to record out of 30, so we were pretty nervous out there. But I'm sure in a way that helped, that was kind of part of the creative process. The recording is more like a diary, a document of where we were.

**AB:** You were saying before how you didn't really go out and get Flamenco guitarists and jam with them just to sound "Spanish." In a similar vein, you used steel drums and other instruments that people might be used to hearing in other contexts, like in Caribbean music. But the way you used them, one doesn't really think of "Caribbean music." It doesn't sound like you're trying to imitate

**Budgie:** It sounds to me more Chinese in a way. Take a song like "Venus Sands": It's got these heavy backbeat drums, and it's steeped in reverb. And I just wanted a phrase to go on top. And basically I found two steel drum pans, two that have high melody—the lead pans—and it was more kind of like finding an expressive movement. I find that has a lot to do with playing as well. It's more like dancing sometimes, seeing where your hands fall. Because there's no real logical tuning to our eyes. It's more convenient for the

rhythms and melodies they're most likely to play in Caribbean songs. But when you come to it with Western eyes, if you like, with that kind of scale we're used to on our marimba or piano, it doesn't make any sense whatsoever. So that's what I found nice about it; I wasn't limited to having to understand where everything was. If I were used to playing steel pans I would probably end up playing Caribbean-sounding parts. But it started to come out like Chinese or Balinese or something. And I love that kind of



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juxtaposing and mixing instruments, mixing the steel drums with the marimba and the vibes, and then putting the whole thing out of context anyway.

**AB:** That reminds me of a statement Boris Williams of the Cure made about limitations actually being something he likes to hear in a band.

**Budgie:** I don't know if this is a cheap excuse, having a lack of technical ability on certain instruments. I mean, we were talking about Peter Erskine before, and obviously we admire his technical prowess. I know my limitations, but I'm not willing to let it put me off. And sometimes you can find things because you are stumbling for a way to do it. When nobody is showing you what's supposedly the correct way or the tried and tested way to do it, you may well come across a way that's as effective as something that you can be taught.

**AB:** Before you went to Spain, how much did you have worked out? Did you actually have any melodies or any words?

**Budgie:** Siouxsie had a few lyrics written, certain ideas, motifs for songs. "Standing There" and "Venus Sands"—probably the idea for those songs were there. And we had "You!" with the 808 track, the drum part; that was all coming through the PA system. Siouxsie had a Dictaphone and started singing a melody

and just the word "you," which was like a punctuation, and that kind of gave us an arrangement of things as the key word. When she sang "you" into the Dictaphone and we played it back, it was so crunchy that the thing would go "crackle," and everything else just crunched into the background. We wanted to retain that idea when it came time to mix it. We actually only achieved it when we came to cut it. We put more compression on the cut so when the "you" comes in, the rest of the track kind of gets pushed down and comes out again.

We also had "Speeding" in a far different version. Siouxsie was on the harmonica, and I was on the Roland *Space Echo*, just going mad. With "Fury Eyes" I think I had almost written the whole marimba part. For "Pluto Drive" I pieced the words together, got a meter together, and then thought of a way to put a tune together as well. That was the first time I actually sat down and worked a song out. I had two or three different parts on the marimba all worked out, and it was quite complicated because they were all different cuts and I had to actually envision it all together.

**AB:** Did you use any sort of notation while you were doing this?

**Budgie:** I've since started to figure it out.

But most of the actual musical parts were in my head. I can work out the bar counts and things and use little notations as to cues. But it was hard for me to envision how it was going to come together at the time. For "Manchild," we got the 808 driving on its own, but also driving an old analog synth. Mike is getting a collection of analog synthesizers together. He loves old equipment, and he thinks it's got more quality of sound. So this thing was pumping away going [mimics driving beat], and that just kicks off the marimba melody, and the lyrics were already there.

**AB:** When you were recording *Boomerang*, were you using click tracks or sequencers? I would imagine you knew ahead of time you were going to be doing a lot of overdubbing.

**Budgie:** I used the 808, but not all the time. Some things were live takes, like "Standing There," which was quantized later for the 12" single. There are several stops within the song that were just a bit too long. "Killing Time" is a classic for that. I'd be jumping up in my seat and then coming in just in time on a cymbal crash. It was like, "Phew, just about made it." But I love things like that. Sometimes it didn't quite work—the pause is a little too long—but you've got to put yourself that far out because you only do it once. You're earning that one chance to record,



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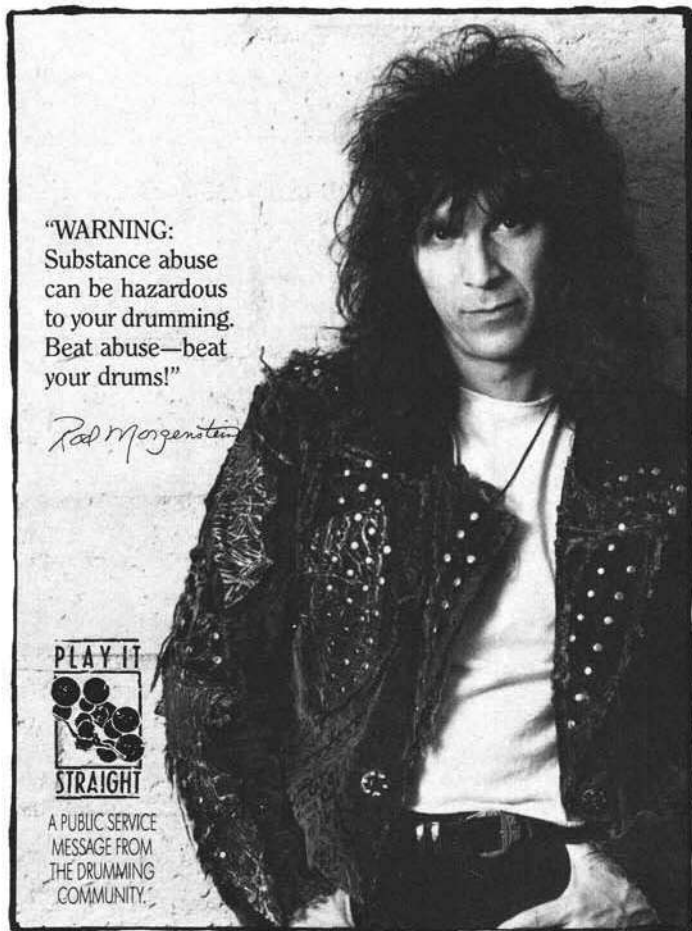
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**AB:** Do you think that the way you worked with the Creatures will influence your work with the Banshees at all, or has it in the past?

**Budgie:** Yeah, I think so. With the B-sides of the Banshees singles, we've always been pretty experimental, but it's always been hard to get that to come through on the album tracks. And I think what we tried to do with the Creatures is exploit that kind of mischievous nature you have when the pressure is not really on. Plus, with a band, like with the Banshees, a lot of your ideas are focused in a certain way, because you know you are going to pass them around to the other members of the band, and they're going to come out of some sort of filtration system. With the Creatures it's just me and Siouxsie, which is the reason I think the overall feel of the album is more direct, more spontaneous. And I think some of that attitude has got to run through to the next Banshees thing—just to kind of step out of the pressure and enjoy it a lot more, be more spontaneous.

Even though *Boomerang* has become more popular than we might have expected—we certainly didn't intend to be in the States doing press, and we certainly hadn't considered playing live—the pressures of the Creatures is different. It's almost like we've reinvented ourselves. People have had so many preconceptions of us for such a long time. We did some live TV in Britain just before Christmas, and we got in the two brass players from the album, and we got Martin Ditcham who plays with Sade. He was playing percussion and coming around the marimba a bit. I had also met up with Tony Butler, the bass player with Big Country. And it was nice getting the feedback from them as musicians that we respect. They would say, "Some of these songs are great. The arrangements and stuff are really unusual." And I had never thought of other people listening to it in that kind of way—going through them and working out the arrangements. Everything just took on a new kind of shape. I was banging at the kit kind of suddenly realizing, "These guys are playing the song." And I was keeping time, feeling something like Count Basie in a very small way. When you're listening to all the parts to see if they're all doing the right things, it's really difficult to think about what you're doing as well. But it worked. It was a real good experience,

and it was also the first time we played with other people outside of the Banshees.

Then we did the Jonathan Ross show, which is a TV show along the lines of the David Letterman show, and they have a house band. We wanted to do "Pluto Drive," and we thought we'd use the house band. We let their drummer play the drum parts; it's live TV, so I thought I'd let him cope with the nerves on that one. I just played a couple of choir voices on the keyboard, and that was another good experience, because I felt, "Yeah, I can actually control it from another angle. You don't *have* to be behind a drumkit." And it didn't feel wrong. I thought that I would feel out of control, I thought I might feel superfluous, like I wasn't involved in it. And that was the first time I stepped out from behind the kit and played another instrument in a live situation.

**AB:** Standing up must have been unusual.

**Budgie:** I could dance and move around, you know, shake me ass, tap the boot, [laughs] But I've no intentions of wanting to be up front all the time. Though I suppose that was a little pointer to what we're doing now with the Creatures live.

**AB:** How are you going about recreating the older material? Technology has changed quite a bit since the earlier Creatures recordings.

**Budgie:** We spent the last week before we came here getting all the old tapes out from the first album and the EP and just going through all these great old analog sounds that were recorded with old pre-digital compressors and noise gates. We've got some really raucous kinds of shaker and percussion sounds, and pieces of metal that I hit. This was all before the days of sampling. So we put them onto DAT tape and stuck them all onto an Akai S1000 sampler, and then rigged up the sequencers and played the marimba parts back in again. It sounded so much harder. It was more like Suicide meets the Creatures or something. It's really more of a dance feel. But then some things had to be thought of differently. Some things I've got to go out and play the top line melodies; some I'm just going crazy, thrashing about on the set.

**AB:** When it's time to write or arrange a Banshees or Creatures song, do you ever find yourself going for particular sounds or instruments or moods in your playing, based on what the lyrics are?

**Budgie:** Actually, I usually write down lyrical cues rather than numbers of bars, for instance. I write down the bar counts, but the way I know where I should be on the bars is by writing down the key word

at the end of that phrase. I listen to the lyrics all the time. When I started playing I always knew the lines of songs. When we were working out the Banshees arrangements from day one, I knew the patterns, and I would take the key from when the vocal changed. And I've always been that way with every band I've worked with.

It's always so important to back the vocalist up. Back up every inflection, every word. If the word comes down one night, you come back behind it. Almost every beat has got to change. I found very much so with Siouxsie that the arrangements took on different shades because her inflections changed. It's very important, I think. You can bombast a lot of songs into submission. Everybody knows the tune so well that you tend not to feel that you need to know the lyrics. But the voice is the subtlest instrument. It's got to be the most personal instrument that exists. Something I've always tried to do is punch out syllables. Try to find a subtle way to do that without losing the beat. Or you can even make the whole beat around it; the syllable can suggest the meter. With just drums and voice, it's different, because you're really supporting in a more general way.

**AB:** Does Siouxsie ever suggest drum parts? I've heard that she plays some drums.

**Budgie:** She played drums and percussion on a couple of the songs on *Boomerang*. She's a frustrated drummer. She always says, "Play like this." The song "Burnup" from *Peepshow* is about a mad pyrotechnic person who is burning up the rain forests. The way the song went was like an analogy of that. So it was like this hoedown, this hurtling along feeling, and Siouxsie said, "Play like a train." Her favorite trick is taking away my hi-hats. It's great doing things like that. Little disciplines like that are quite interesting. Taking away the crutch you always lean on. It's really difficult; suddenly you've got to keep the tempo some other way. It's recommended.

**AB:** You've never overdone it with cymbals on Banshees records, and *Boomerang* doesn't have too much in the way of cymbal crashes, either.

**Budgie:** One that I do use is the Zildjian *EFX*. I went down to Zildjian before going away and thought, "What are all these about?" I found they actually had slightly different notes within the same size, and they're like somewhere between a cymbal and a crotale. I'd almost be quite happy just playing them because they are so small and quick—and I love splash cymbals. On "Manchild," for instance, you can hear the whole pattern;



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it's quicker and simpler. They don't clutter up the top line, and they don't get in the way of the voice. Cymbals take up so many frequencies. I always like that Peter Gabriel album where he didn't have any cymbals at all. It had such a clarity of sound. And the thing was you could use the gates down on the toms in a massive way because, if you gate the cymbals on the same track, obviously you change the tom sound. And big cymbals can be such an obvious way of punctuating things, like after the end of a fill, or at the end of a song. It's like, "This...Is...Going...To...Be...The...END!"

**AB:** As far as mallet instruments go, have you ever gotten to play them with the Banshees to the extent that you do with the Creatures?

**Budgie:** I think I first used marimba on the Banshees record *Hyaena*, on the song "Swimming Horses." The song started with Robert Smith playing it on piano, so I was doing this kind of melody, which is more like a sequence-sounding thing. I really love Phillip Glass, that kind of repetitive music. I always tend to do things more in that kind of linear way. I used it quite a lot on the cover versions album, *Through The Looking Glass*. I loved doing it on "Gun," the John Cale song. That part is a reversal of the guitar parts, just the same notes on a different

beat, and we just played around with different time signatures.

**AB:** Have you ever taken lessons on melodic instruments?

**Budgie:** No, I still have to figure out where middle C is. I just haven't had the time or the inclination.

**AB:** You seem to have somewhat of a knowledge, though.

**Budgie:** I think you can't help but pick that up somehow when you're in a band. It's trial and error, watching the people and picking up chords. There's a great marimba player, Evelyn Glennie, and she's deaf. Again, it's totally humbling to watch someone like that who's so gifted struggle with a handicap. When she tunes, she knows what C is by the way it makes her finger vibrate. C goes to about here, and the lower the note, the more it comes up the hand, and then through the foot. And it's great to see that. I love it. It kind of knocks you back 50 yards. And you just realize that there is so much more going on than the simple kind of expression you're allowed within pop music. I think you need to always be aware of that, because it's so easy to latch on to what was successful about your last record. And you owe it to yourself to keep pushing for something more—something new.



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and we triggered a bigger snare sound.

**RF:** So you add the electronics after you record.

**TW:** Right. I never use a drum machine, ever. They're great for demos, but that's it.

**RF:** Do you use a click track when you record?

**TW:** I will do my best to persuade the drummer to just use it for starters, for the intro and maybe half of the first verse, but as soon as a drummer gets ahead of a click track, your song softens. If he has to slow up to let the click catch up with him, the feel goes out the window. I don't mind speeding up, but slowing down after you've sped up just doesn't make it.

Some guys are really very good at playing exactly to the click. Jimmy Chalfant from Kix is flawless. He's had club experience until it's coming out of his ears, which is great. Kix is one of the tightest bands on the road. You don't get good by going out for six months playing stadiums and then taking six months off. You get good by playing for five years for two and a half hours a night.

**RF:** Can you dig deep into some of the specifics of some tracks that you might favor drum-wise or tracks that might have been difficult to get?

**TW:** "Wildside" on *Girls, Girls, Girls* by Motley Crue was a great drum track.

**RF:** Why? And how long did that take to get?

**TW:** It didn't take that long. We used a bunch of samples on that. Tommy is a gadget monster. We had a number of differences of opinion on how to proceed, because I'm more organic, and I think Motley Crue should remain Motley Crue with their feet firmly on the street, not in technology.

**RF:** How do you balance that kind of difference of opinion?

**TW:** I don't mind if he wants to make some funny noises after the groove is

there, and the groove was definitely there. That whole album was interesting. I like the way the drums came out on that record.

**RF:** How did you go about getting that?

**TW:** At his request, we recorded kick, snare, and hi-hat first and then we did all the toms and cymbals separately, and it came out just perfect. He wanted to do that to get good isolation, and he thought that would really help with the sound—and it did.

**RF:** So how much sampling do you actually do?

**TW:** Obviously more now than a few years ago, but I don't think we sampled very much, if any at all, on the Kix record. I don't think we sampled too much of anything on Steve Riley's drums on the LA Guns record, either. There's a lot of sampling on Poison. I'd rather not do it, though. I'd rather just have the perfect snare. If you hear the same exact snare on every beat in all the verses, even the untrained listener is going to be left with a more homogenized feeling than if he hears a real wooden stick hitting a head.

**RF:** How long does it usually take to get a drum sound?

**TW:** It doesn't take me a long time so much as whoever is engineering—and that takes the better part of a day. We might come in at noon, set up, change the mic's, put in packing blankets, cut holes in the kick drum head, work with the room mic's, and change the cymbals. Then we'll tweak the next day, and then record the next day. The kick is just about the only thing I don't feel too bad about sampling, because it's the thing I think needs it the most, not the snare.

**RF:** How about creative musical ideas? Do you leave that sort of thing completely up to the drummer and/or engineer?

**TW:** Oh, no. That's the only thing I do—deal with the music. I will tell the engineer which way to go for a sound, but really what's on my mind is the music. In pre-production, I change a lot of kick drum parts and a lot of cymbal parts, mostly in the choice of the cymbal.

**RF:** What are you looking for?

**TW:** I'm looking for the perfect drum part for the song. If I think there should be a fill or no fill, or if we should double up on something, or we should be on the hi-hat instead of the ride, I'll say it.

**RF:** Are the guys okay with that?

**TW:** Oh yes. If I tell them to try five things in a row that all stink, then they're going to start wondering about me. But if I give them some intelligent suggestions, they'll be fine with it. Drummers are, by and large, an incredibly agreeable lot.

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"Anything For Your Love" were done with the band playing to a drum machine part. On "Anything For Your Love" and "Breaking Point," the kick and snare were programmed, and the toms and certain snare fills were played along with the track as it went down, because Eric didn't like to play to a machine. He always likes to play live, so he wanted a band feel all the time.

**RF:** What about the Phil Collins track on that record, "Bad Love"?

**RT:** That was cut live with the band, and then we did overdubs afterwards. It was great fun. On "Pretending" and "No Alibis," it's just drum machine.

**RF:** Can you give us a little idea of what sound you generally go for and how you go about getting it?

**RT:** You never really go for a particular sound. The song and the record dictate what you go after. You can get very intimate sounds in there too, but when you go for that big sound, there's no place like the Power Station. But then again, we did the drums on the Winwood album at Unique, which is this tiny little dump. The reason the drums sound so good is because there was a lot of electronic stuff done to them, although it doesn't really sound like there was. There's a lot of non-linear digital delay, so it sounds like it's in a big room. And we used samples to add to some parts.

**RF:** These days I guess it doesn't much matter where you record; you can really make it sound any way you want with modern technology.

**RT:** That's what's fun about working with Jimmy Bralower. You can really create an idealized drum sound, because he has all these samples that he made in the Power Station, and he's got good taste, too.

**RF:** Can you think of specific tracks that you might favor drum-wise and how they came to be?

**RT:** Some of the stuff Steve Gadd did on Rickie Lee Jones' first two records was really spectacular. "Chuck E's In Love"—I love that drum track. The drum fill in the middle of that record is so peculiar. I remember it frightened [coproducer] Lenny Waronker when he played it. I said, "No, it's great." Then he went, "Of course," but it was a little shocking at first. And "We Belong Together" on the *Pirates* album—there's such an explosion when the drums come in.

I like "Back In The High Life," too. I love that march stuff. There was a little machine part on there at first, and John and I actually came up with that part.

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**RF:** I take it from what you've said that you like the balance of the musician giving his own creative input with his being able to take direction from you or the artist.

**RT:** Absolutely.

**RF:** What would be the initial approach, or would that have to do with the artist? How would material be presented to a drummer?

**RT:** Usually the artist will play the song in the studio, and everybody will sit around and listen to it.

**RF:** Then would you say to the drummer, "This is what I have in mind..."?

**RT:** Only if there were something specific I had in mind, or the artist might have a specific thing in mind. But usually it's just a matter of playing it. There are so many different things that happen. Rufus & Chaka Khan's "Ain't Nobody," for instance, is John Robinson. That was a machine part that Hawk [Wolinski] wrote, and then John played it. I think that was the first time I ever recorded separate pieces. We did hi-hat first, then kick and snare, and then we did the toms later. John just went and killed that part. It was practically one take on each part. And because of that record, I knew he would be the guy to play on the Winwood record.

He could play these separate parts, and it would come out sounding like the greatest live part you'd ever heard.

**RF:** Do you prefer cutting that way?

**RT:** I wouldn't say so. I like it all. I like whatever works.

**RF:** What would make that decision for you?

**RT:** It's hard to say. Sometimes you cut a track and it just doesn't come out right, so you have to change stuff or redo it. It happens all the time, so you have to approach it differently. You think, "Maybe it should be a drum machine instead of a real drum or real drums instead of a drum machine." You're always looking for stuff.

## JOSH LEO

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around—doesn't agree with the new producers and what they're doing. People like Barry Beckett, Paul Worley, Ed Seay, Steve Buckingham, and Rodney Crowell—when he does his own records—seem to have the drums up. I think Beckett right now is winning, as far as I'm concerned. I'm trying to rival him. He's making some wonderful-sounding records, and the drums are really loud. It is a real art if you can have the drums up really, really loud—which is where I think they ought to be—and still hear every word that the vocalist is singing. That's one of the hardest things to do for an engineer.

**RF:** You also mentioned to me prior to this that you like to use band members when you can. How do you make the choice of using a band member versus a session player? Isn't Nashville more bent on using session players?

**JL:** They are definitely bent on using session players. My first break down here came from producing the Dirt Band. The previous producers had been using all session players. I grew up listening to the Dirt Band and thought they were wonderful. And I said, "If I'm elected as producer, I will use all of you guys on your own record." Naturally I got the job. We went in and cut some songs that ended up getting their career back on track, from what I've been told. All of a sudden the personality came out again.

**RF:** So how do you make that choice?

**JL:** Most of the time I try to use the band. If I can't use all the members, I augment the band with session players. The term "session musician" is deceiving, because the people I augment with are usually people who have been in bands and who understand the band concept. Craig Krampf is one of those drummers who is very sensitive to doing just that. He will sit down with Alabama

and knock himself silly just rehearsing for hours and hours. Not too many other session players will do that. I'm not scared of musicians coming up with good ideas. I don't have to be the brilliant guy. In fact, 80% of what I do is just getting the best out of people by saying, "Hey, anybody got a good idea?"

## JEFF WEBER

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true, more often than not. I go for a very punchy kick drum sound that has a richness or roundness to the bottom half of it. I generally love a punchy mid-range, so I can keep the kick down low in the mix, and yet it still cuts. This is where microphone selection plays a very important part in the success or failure of drums on record. There are very few mic's that can make a cymbal sound like a cymbal, and there are very few mic's that can make snares sound the way they really are.

**RF:** Can you be specific?

**JW:** Usually we use a 421, a 47 FET, and an AKG D112 on the kick. On the snare, we mike it on the top and the bottom. On the top we use a Shure SM57 and on the bottom, a Sony C-55P or a 451 with a 20db pad. On the hi-hat I use a 451 with a 10db pad. For overheads we must have C-12s. Room mic's are Sony M50s; toms are 421s or RE20s. That's the general scheme of things.

**RF:** The norm for you is about a two-day record?

**JW:** Yes. A ten-day record is quite extensive for me. I did my first 30-day album this past January, and it was really interesting. Getting studio tans is not my idea of making money. What I'm asking the players to do is what they've done their whole lives—just play. And I'll get it. If you do it two or three times, you start to think about it. Once you start to think about it, you lose the emotion, you lose the feeling, and you start focusing in on the notes—the beginning, middle, and end of a note. I don't want that. I want the beginning, middle, and end of the song. I like to get it within the first few takes and move on.

**RF:** When you're hiring a musician, you're really hiring his creativity.

**JW:** Absolutely. Music is a collaborative art. If we tell them exactly what to play, then we might as well program it. Why call a Vinnie or a Jeff if you're not interested in their personality? Their personality on drums is very critical to my work. We've heard most of the grooves before, so all we have left is the artistry of the drummer—the personality that he brings to it, the sensitivity on the



snare, the delicateness of his mallet work, the feathering on the hi-hat, the intensity of his foot on the kick drum.

**RF:** Can you think of tracks you favor drum-wise?

**JW:** I love the work that I've done with Bud Harner and Uncle Festive. There are some really punchy drum tracks. The Uncle Festive record called *That We Do Know* is great. Some of the things I've done with Vinnie and Jeff are obviously punchy as hell. There's a new Pat Kelley record called *High Heels* that was done with Vinnie predominantly, and I think there's some nice work there. The Luis Conte record called *Black Forest* has some nice drums on it, but a different type of drumming. The problem is that my cup runneth over. The hardest part is, "Who are we going to get for this?"

**RF:** I guess the biggest part of your job is putting the right people together for the project. Have you ever been wrong?

**JW:** Sure. Sometimes I'll let the artist dictate against my better judgement. I'm no genius; I'm just a fan like anybody else. I go for what I like to hear. Guys like Harvey Mason—fantastic drummer. He can handle any situation. On the Gary Herbig record, our budget was \$17,000.

They did it just like that. [snaps his fingers] Joey Heredia was also on that. I had never worked with him before, and I was very impressed.

**RF:** Aside from Uncle Festive, you really don't work with any self-contained groups, which is probably just as well, because sometimes one or the other player...

**JW:** ...disappoints you to a certain extent. That's the reason why, whenever I work with a self-contained situation, I let them rent drums that I like. They don't take the time with their kits as much as the guys who are in the business of taking care of their kits do. One of my secret weapons is having a set of drums that I know sounds great in the studio. That's not to be insulting to drummers, but I'll do that every chance I get. I might even pay the cartage guy to stay there to listen with me to see exactly how the tuning on the drum is. Those guys are very important to me. They make what I do sound better.



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He and Swallow worked especially well together. As important as it is who each individual player is, it's almost as important how well they fit together as a team. In fact, one of my approaches to putting a group together or planning a record is to get a concept for the project, and then think, 'Who's the ideal drummer for this kind of music?' I pick the drummer, then I ask him what bass player is right for the project, in his opinion. On the record I did recently with Pat Metheny [*Reunion*; reviewed in the June '90 *MD*], I went to Peter [Erskine] and said, 'Who's your favorite electric player? Here's the nature of the project. Who do you recommend?' And he said, 'Will Lee. He makes me sound like a million dollars.' I would never have thought of Will, because Will isn't thought of so much as a jazz player as he is a rock player and studio musician. But I went by Peter's recommendation, and it turned out to be wonderful. So I put a lot of importance on how they play together. Mike Hyman and Swallow were a great team, rhythmically, and it made it ideal to play with them."

After Mike Hyman, Adam Nussbaum was in Burton's band for close to a year. "We didn't do any records during that time," Gary says, "and we didn't actually work a lot. I was doing a lot of special projects that year. I like Adam a lot; we're still good friends. He had played a lot with Swallow in John Scofield's band, so it seemed a natural thing. But after a year I reorganized again, so I didn't really get much playing time in with Adam—although what we did worked fine. I love the way he sounds with Brecker's band. When I went to see them last year, I thought Adam was the highlight of the group."

Marty Richards was Burton's next drummer, and Gary describes him as an unexpected discovery. "I was doing a project at Berklee with some students," Gary recalls, "and at the last minute, the drummer I intended to use couldn't do it. Some of the other students recommended Marty, who I hadn't really heard of. So I said fine, and told them to tell Marty to come to the next rehearsal. So this little kid, who looked like he was about 13, showed up wearing a coat that was about four sizes too big for him, looking scared to death, and I thought, 'This is the drummer?'" Gary pauses, laughing at the memory. "I mean, you think of drummers as being these macho types in a way; it's a pretty physical instrument. And this kid hardly looked

like he could carry the set in. Although he was already 20 or 21, he looked astoundingly young for his age.

"We started to play," Gary continues, "and it wasn't real polished and smooth. He hadn't been playing jazz much, mostly rock. But there was a very catchy quality that I noticed in his time feel, and I thought there was something there that was exciting. So then another school project came along; this was a two-week trip. I put together an all-student band to do it, and I picked Marty again on the strength of that one date. Over the course of the two weeks, I spent every night talking to him. I'd stand next to him as he was playing with the other guys and say, 'No, do the hi-hat different...change that. Listen to the way the piano player is comping and focus on that now.' No one had ever really told him what he should be doing. But he was an incredibly quick learner. Within the two weeks he was just killing me.

"So I started using him in the band, and it worked out great. I've watched him develop into a very solid, sensitive player—one of the best listening drummers I've ever known. He hears everything you're doing, and gives you that feeling that you're being supported. He also is one of the most versatile. When I'm not working, he works constantly doing rhythm & blues gigs, fusion gigs, trio jazz, backing singers—just about any kind of thing. And each one of those factions of people have the belief that when he's playing their music, that's his real thing. Marty seems to be able to sell it that well. So I'm very proud of him and hope that we get to keep playing together for a long time to come."

The most recent drummer to record with Burton is Peter Erskine, who also toured with Gary and Pat Metheny to support the *Reunion* album. Discovering Erskine was another pleasant surprise for Gary. "Sometimes you form an impression of someone," Gary explains, "but it's not based on anything real. The first time I heard Peter's name, people were raving about this hot new drummer that Kenton had discovered. I had become somewhat anti-Kenton by that time in my musical taste. So right away I thought, 'Definitely not someone I'm going to be interested in.'

"Then I heard that he was with Weather Report and Steps and other groups, but I never saw or heard him playing with them. But then, about four years ago, we ended up booked on the same gig at a club in New York. He was with John Abercrombie's trio opposite my group. So I got to hear him for a whole week, and I was knocked out. I spent

most of the breaks that week listening to their sets, and really enjoyed it.

"The first occasion I found to use Peter on something was a record I was producing for Makoto Ozone," Gary continues. "I suggested Peter, and Makoto had enjoyed listening to them all that week as well, so we got Peter and [bassist] Marc Johnson both to be on his record. And even though I wasn't playing with Peter, that gave me another chance to watch him in action for several days, convincing me that I really wanted to play with him at the first possible moment. So for the next record I was making, which was *Times Like These*, I called Peter and Marc.

"One of the things I noticed immediately was that Peter was obviously influenced by Roy. In fact, Peter once gave me this little grin and did an exact Roy Haynes lick, and I knew then that Roy was definitely one of his heroes. And Peter said later that he used to listen to the records I made with Roy a lot when he was learning to play. These days I often say that Peter is my favorite drummer. For most things I would think of doing, he would probably be my first choice.

"Peter has this way of coming up with clever little things in recording sessions that keep it interesting," Burton adds. "It doesn't become routine as you do a second or third take of a tune. It stays fresh. One of the things I admire about him is that he hasn't just relegated his talents to the recording studio—that he still gets out and tours and plays in performance a lot. I'm sure that Peter could stay home and make a good living just doing recording. But he obviously is drawn to performing as well, and I think that it keeps his music more interesting and exposes him to new things. It also allows people to see him, hear him, and learn from him much better than if he just stayed in the studios, as some great drummers have. So I admire that about Pete; I think it keeps his music strong and healthy."

While producing an album for saxophonist Tommy Smith, Burton had the opportunity to work with a drummer he has always admired: Jack DeJohnette. "Producing him was wonderful," Gary smiles. "And, at the end of it we both said, 'The only thing wrong with this is that we didn't get to play together.' By the time I had spent several days with him in the studio, I couldn't wait to get a shot at it. And I know him quite well. So every time we see each other now or talk, we always touch on the subject of doing something together. I think we'll manage to do something soon, probably a record project. And I'm sure it will be a great

thrill. Everybody I know who's played with Jack raves about him."

Considering Burton's association with so many great drummers, and the fact that the vibraphone is a percussive instrument itself, one might expect Burton to feel a natural affinity for the drums. But that's not the case. "I don't relate much to the actual skill of playing the drums," he admits. "This is a curious thing with me. I feel I have great taste in drummers, but the truth is—and *Modern Drummer* might not be the right place to say it," he laughs—"to me, drums make two sounds: thump or crash. Drummers are always asking me, 'Do you like this tom or that tom, or this cymbal or that cymbal?' I can't tell them apart. One may be a little higher or lower, but to me there's not that much difference. That's not what I'm concerned about. What I care about is how it makes me feel when I play with them. How well do they interact with my soloing? Do we conceive this tune and its feel the same way, or am I hearing it one way while they're hearing it another?"

"The drummer," Gary says, "controls everything when you play together in a group. From the moment I finish counting off the tune and the first note starts, I'm no longer in charge. The drummer is. And if I'm the leader, I have

to communicate to the drummer what I want to take place in this tune so that he will make it happen. He becomes the on-the-spot representative for the leader, because you can't control a band from a vibraphone or from other instruments. The drums have all the right characteristics to control the feel, the dynamics, and the shape of everything. So the drummer ends up being the real leader of the band. That's why leaders will care more about their drummer than any other instrument in the band.

"Generally, whenever I play with a new group, it's the drummer I have to make contact with first. In fact, if you watch most groups rehearse, the leader will spend twice as much time talking to the drummer as he will talking to any other player. Maybe some leaders simply put a group together and play along with it, and whatever happens, happens. I'm the kind of leader who really wants to *lead*. I have a vision for how the tune should go, where the feel is, what the tempo is, what the mood should be—everything. I don't want to do it a totally different way than what I'm hearing in my head. So I spend a lot of time working with the drummer to get what I want to hear.

"Other players aren't as crucial," Gary contends. "If the saxophone player has a weak solo on a tune, it's only weak during

his solo. If the drummer is weak on a tune, *nobody* sounds good. So a lot rides on the drummer. A good drummer makes *you* sound good without your having to work at it. As a friend of mine, saxophonist John LaPorta, once described it, 'If it feels right, you can do things you didn't know you could do, but if it feels wrong, even playing quarter notes is difficult.' And that rests with the drummer."

### Selected Discography

Listed below are prominent drummers who have recorded with Gary Burton, and some of the Burton albums on which they appear.

**Joe Morello:** *New Vibe Man In Town* (RCA)

**Roy Haynes:** *Duster* (RCA), *Country Roads & Other Places* (RCA), *Times Square* (ECM)

**Bob Moses:** *Lofty Fake Anagram* (RCA), *In Concert* (RCA), *Ring* (ECM)

**Bill Goodwin:** *Gary Burton & Keith Jarrett* (Atlantic), *Throb* (Atlantic)

**Danny Gottlieb:** *Passengers* (ECM)

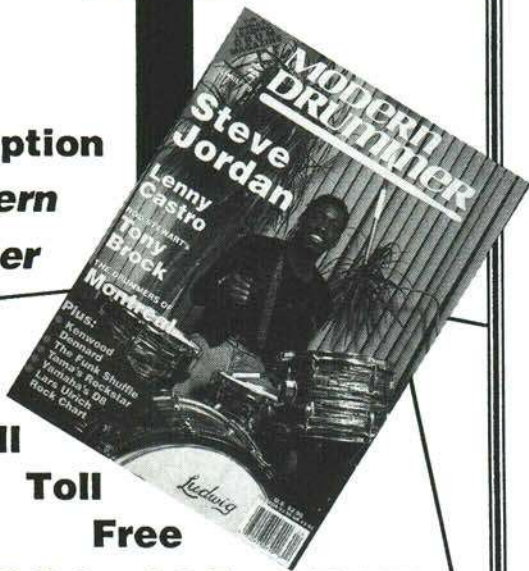
**Mike Hyman:** *Easy As Pie* (ECM), *Picture This* (ECM), *Real Life Hits* (ECM)

**Marty Richards:** *Whiz Kids* (ECM)

**Peter Erskine:** *Times Like These* (GRP), *Reunion* (GRP)



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## MUSICANADA SHOW REPORT

MusiCanada, the annual trade show for the Canadian music industry, was held in Toronto on May 5, 6, and 7. Sponsored by the Music Industries Association of Canada (M.I.A.C.), the event took place in the Automotive Building at Toronto's historic Exhibition Place on the shore of Lake Ontario. The show provided an opportunity for Canadian manufacturers and distributors to display their products for music retailers and consumers.

Although significantly smaller than the U.S. NAMM show (due primarily to the fact that only Canadian exhibitors were allowed), MusiCanada was certainly no less exciting. The interest level for music and music-related products in Canada is as high as anywhere else in the world, and the fact that Saturday, May 5 was an 11-hour day dedicated to attendance by the general

public made it especially intense. Designated "Make Music Day" by the sponsors of the show, the day featured constant seminars and clinics in addition to the exhibits on the trade floor. Drumming was heavily represented, with back-to-back clinics lasting the better part of the afternoon.

Kenny Aronoff kicked off the festivities with a performance in which he emphasized the importance of grooving and creating the right parts for a song. His clinic was sponsored by Tama. Immediately following, Sabian presented two Canadian clinicians, Rick Gratton and Paul DeLong—both exciting and talented players—along with American drumming legend Larrie Londin. All three players were enthusiastically received by the large audience of drummers.

Pearl finished the day with a clinic featuring Canadian drummer Vitto Rezza (currently playing with Gino Vanelli as well as with his own band, Five After Four), Latin star Walfredo Reyes, Jr., (currently with



The RMIF drumkit, from Riga, Latvia.

Santana), and Living Colour's dynamic William Calhoun. These impressive players brought the six solid hours of drumming to an exciting conclusion.

In terms of products on display, most were familiar from previous trade shows earlier in the year. However, a few items were new, and products of Canadian manufacture were especially featured.

Sabian debuted the *B8 Pro* cymbal line, which they state is a totally new approach to the manufacture of "Euro-style" mid-price

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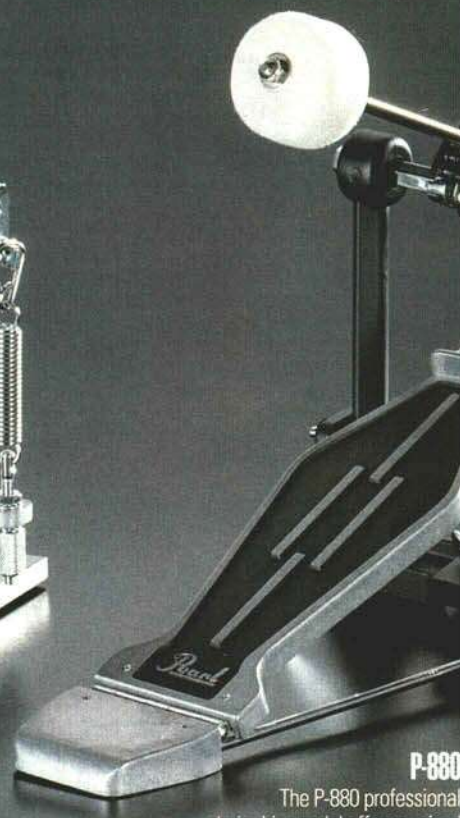
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cymbals. Early responses were extremely favorable. Canadian custom drum maker Fred Pepper displayed a piccolo snare from his Canwood line at the Calato booth. (Calato has a major distribution operation for many products in Canada.) A drumstick line little known in the U.S. but extremely popular in Canada is Grooves Percussion; they were on hand to display their wide selection of all-maple sticks.

However, the single most interesting item—simply on the basis of its origin and its unique appearance—was a drumset from the Riga Musical Instrument Factory (R.M.I.F.) of Riga—the capital city of Latvia. Imported from Latvia (which declared its independence from the Soviet Union during the MusiCanada show!) by D. Hinschberger of Canada, the kit was brand-new—but looked as if it had been designed and built many years ago. It featured a marine pearl finish, metal hoops on the bass drum, and extremely light-duty stands, legs, and spurs. The kit appeared as



**Sterling Munro displayed Grooves Percussion drumsticks.**

though it had been designed by someone who had no access to recent drums or catalogs, and so had to rely on a Gretsch or Rogers catalog circa 1959. However, it carried a suggested retail price of just around \$300.00 (Canadian), which the importer hopes will make it extremely appealing to budget-conscious buyers. Merely for the fact that it was a Russian-built drumkit and it was there at a Western trade show, the kit drew crowds; it remains to be seen as to whether it is a precursor of Eastern-bloc products entering the world music market.

Another drum-related feature of this year's MusiCanada show was the presence of *Modern Drummer* magazine—hosted by Keith Williams and his company, National Music Methods, Ltd., who displayed the magazine in their booth. *MD* was represented by Managing Editor Rick Van Horn—who met with manufacturers, artists, and visiting drummers—and Sales and Marketing Director Crystal W. Van Horn—on hand to answer questions

**P-880P**

For those who like their bass drum pedals supercharged, the famous P-880 is now available with a full steel base plate for added stability. For maximum power and punch the P-880P delivers.

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regarding dealer sales, subscriptions, and other aspects of MD's operations. *Modern Drummer* wishes to extend thanks to MIAC, and to the country of Canada for making their stay comfortable and successful.

## NATIONAL DRUM ASSOCIATION LAUNCHED

The National Drum Association (NDA) officially began business this past March 1 in New York City. In the preparation and planning stages for two years, the organization has tapped the help and advisement of drumming specialists from all areas of the percussion industry. According to its organizers, the NDA was created "for the advancement, education, communication, promotion, and expansion of drumming." The NDA hopes to accomplish these goals

through a monthly newsletter, a national convention, a museum and hall of fame, and a national drummers referral. For further information, contact the NDA at Times Square Station, PO Box 737, New York, NY 10036, tel: (212) 768-DRUM, fax: (212) 768-0510.

## YAMAHA DRUMS FOR LUNCH

Five leading drummers shared their experience and techniques during Yamaha's Drums For Lunch—a series of free lunchtime concerts that took place May 14 - 18th at the Yamaha Communication Center Showroom near Carnegie Hall in New York City. The series was led off by Yves Gerard on Monday's bill, with Buddy Williams, whose credits include the Manhattan Transfer, Roberta Flack, and *Saturday Night Live*, performing with a large band on Tuesday. Richie Morales and a trio per-

formed on Wednesday, with *Late Night With David Letterman's* Anton Fig performing on Thursday. Friday's show concluded the series with a clinic by Mickey Curry of Bryan Adams and Hall & Oates fame. Each day between 4:30 and 5:30 a discussion aimed at beginners was led by Bob Boyd, who was recently featured on Bernard Purdie's drum video.

## DISTRIBUTION NEWS

Vater Percussion has announced that Kaman Music is now the exclusive distributor of the company's drumsticks. This is actually a renewal of Vater's agreement with Kaman, which began this past January.

Amberstar International has announced their recent exclusive distribution agreement with Martin Organisation Canada, Ltd. for all Canadian sales of Amberstar products, including *Wam-Rod* drumsticks, *Slammer* practice pads, and *Justice Grips* leather drumstick grips. All dealer inquiries

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Island Musical Supplies will distribute Paiste's 200 cymbal line, which was designed with beginners and students in mind. Already being distributed by Island are Rogers drums and products by Furman, Audio-Technica, and Nady Systems. For information contact Island Musical Supplies at PO Box 217, Staten Island, NY 10307, tel: (718) 966-1192, fax: (718) 966-4227.

## ENDORSER NEWS

**Greg D'Angelo** of White Lion using Electro-Voice microphones.

**Michael Lean** of TUFF and **Glenn Evans** of Nuclear Assault are two of Sonor's most recent endorsers.

In addition to his traditional cymbal

setup, **Neil Peart** has been using two Wuhan *Lion* cymbals on tour with Rush.

**Ron Campbell** of Archangel playing Rogers drums.

**Pete Magadini** playing Yamaha drums.

Latin Percussion has recently attracted the talents of **Danny Cummings**, **Gary Husband**, and **John Santos**.

Recent additions to Zildjian's endorser list include **Rudi Richmond** of the Quireboys, **Mick Brown** of the Mission U.K., **Martin Hallett** of Transvision Vamp, **Mark Foreshaw** of Hue And Cry, and **Stump Monroe** of Almighty.

**Liberty DeVitto** has joined Pro-Mark's endorser roster.

**Deen Castronovo** playing Premier drums.

The list of drummers playing DW drums includes **Fred Coury** of Cinderella, **Tony Thompson**, **Jonathan Moffet**, and **Steve Duncan** of the Desert Rose Band. In addition, **Jimmy DeGrasso** of Y&T, **Tris Imboden**, **Steve Perkins** of Jane's

Addiction, **Dallas Taylor** (CSN&Y), **Rock Deadrick** (Tracy Chapman), **Matt Chamberlain** of the New Bohemians, **Mark Shulman** (Richard Marx), **Ben Gramm** (Lou Gramm), **Tony Morales** (Rickie Lee Jones), and **Herman Mathews III** of Kenny Loggins' band are also playing DW. Other additions to DW's roster include the Judds' **George Honea**, Kik Tracy's **Scott Donnell**, **Steve Ebe** of Human Radio, Dweezil Zappa's **Josh Freese**, **John Xepoleas**, **Steve Bray** of the Breakfast Club, **Kenny Richards** with the Dirty White Band, **Scott Cargo** of Venice, **Louie Weaver** with Petra, **Phillip Fisher** of Fishbone, **Jack Bruno** with Tina Turner, **Michael Organ** with Henry Lee Summer, and **Richard Ploog** of the Church.

Nashville drummer/artist **Paul Overstreet** on Pearl drums.





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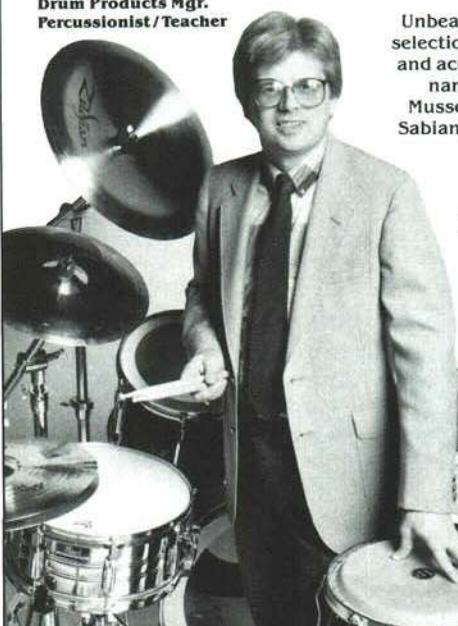
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## SABIAN B8 PRO



Sabian has introduced its *B8* line of non-cast, "Euro-style" bronze cymbals, aimed at the "budget conscious" drummer. The line includes splash, hi-hat, Chinese, crash, and ride models, and, according to the company, possesses a sound that is "inherently fast, bright, and cutting, with a degree of tightness and control that is characteristic in Euro-style cymbals." A *B8 Performance Set* made up of 14" Medium Hi-hats, a 16" Medium Crash,

and a 20" Medium Ride is also available from the company at a special price. **Sabian Ltd., Meductic, New Brunswick, Canada, E0H 1L0, tel: (506) 272-2019, fax: (506) 328-9697.**

## RADIO KING REINTRODUCED

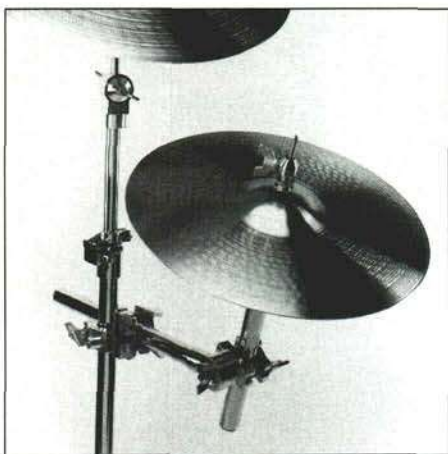


HSS has announced the reintroduction of Slingerland's *Radio King* snare drum, made with the same specifications as the original drum. Two models are available: the *SRK110*, a 5 1/2x14 drum, and the *SRK111*, a 6 1/2x14 model. The *Radio King's* shell is made of one piece of steam-bent sugar maple with a hide-glued lap joint, and one-piece, hide-glued, lapped reinforcement rings, and features a 30° beveled bearing edge. The drum also features original Slingerland-style, straight, flanged, brass counterhoops, which are chrome-plated and include an engraved batter hoop. The snare mechanism is a Slingerland *S673 Rapid* strainer with original Slingerland-style 16-strand drawn wire snares. The drum is available in creme lacquer, black lacquer, red violin, natural maple, and marine pearl. **HSS, Inc., Lakeridge Park, 101 Sycamore Dr., Ashland, VA 23005, (804) 550-2700.**



*Slingerland* The seven-piece Spirit Plus from Slingerland.

## DW C-HAT



DW 9210 C-Hat

DW has announced the availability of their complete line of *C-Hat* closed hi-hats and mounting systems. DW's 9200 *C-Hats* are auxiliary closed hi-hats mountable at various locations around

the drumset, and feature a double-locking hi-hat clutch and a toothless steel tilter assembly with a position reset handle. The 9210 *C-Hat* also features a 6" rod and a tiltable, locking bottom cymbal seat, as well as an *MG2 Mega Clamp* with angle-adjustable 1" tube, and an *MG1 Mega Clamp* for mounting on tom or cymbal stands. Models are also available without the *Mega Clamps*.

Also available from DW is the 9212B *C-Hat* boom arm with a tiltable, adjustable mounting assembly, which replaces any standard 1/2" cymbal boom arm on cymbal floor stands. In addition, the 9234B features the complete 9212B, along with an additional angle adjustment and a 3/4" telescoping tube for use with many drum rack systems. Both models can be mounted and played in either right-side-up or upside-down positions. **Drum Workshop, 2697 Lavery Court, Suite 16, Newbury Park, CA 91320, (805) 499-6863.**

## REGAL TIP SPLITSTIX



Calato USA, makers of Regal Tip sticks, have introduced their *Splitstix*, which feature the feel of a drumstick with a sound closer to that of brushes. The effect is achieved by splitting a portion of the playing end of the stick. An adjustable rubber ring changes tonal possibilities by being moved along the split side of the stick, controlling how open or closed the pieces are. The model currently available is 16" long and .655" in diameter (similar to Regal Tip's 2B model). **J.D. Calato Manufacturing Co., Inc., 45012 Hyde Park Blvd, Niagara Falls, NY 14305, (716) 285-3546.**

# The Calm Before The Storm.

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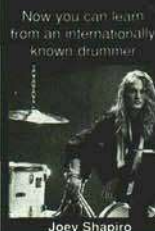
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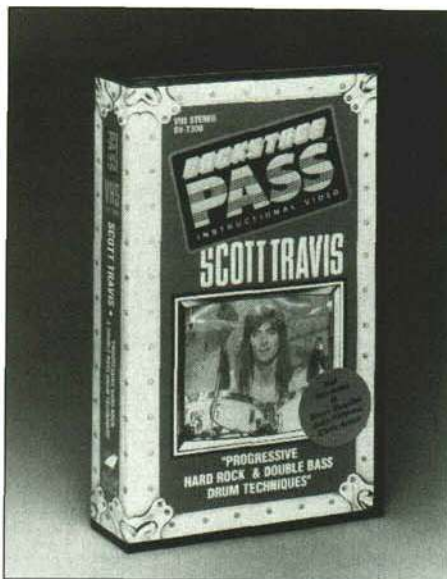
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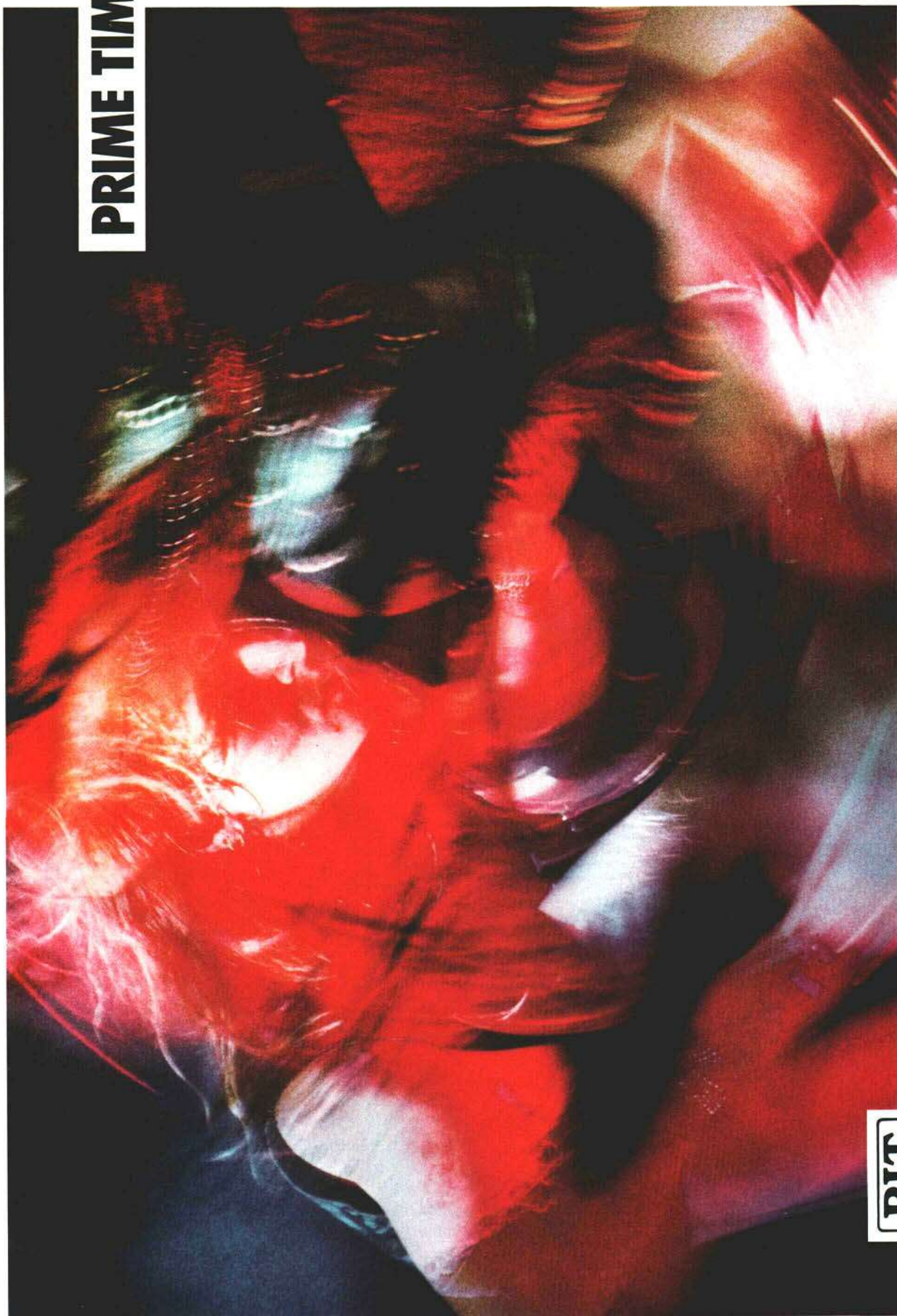
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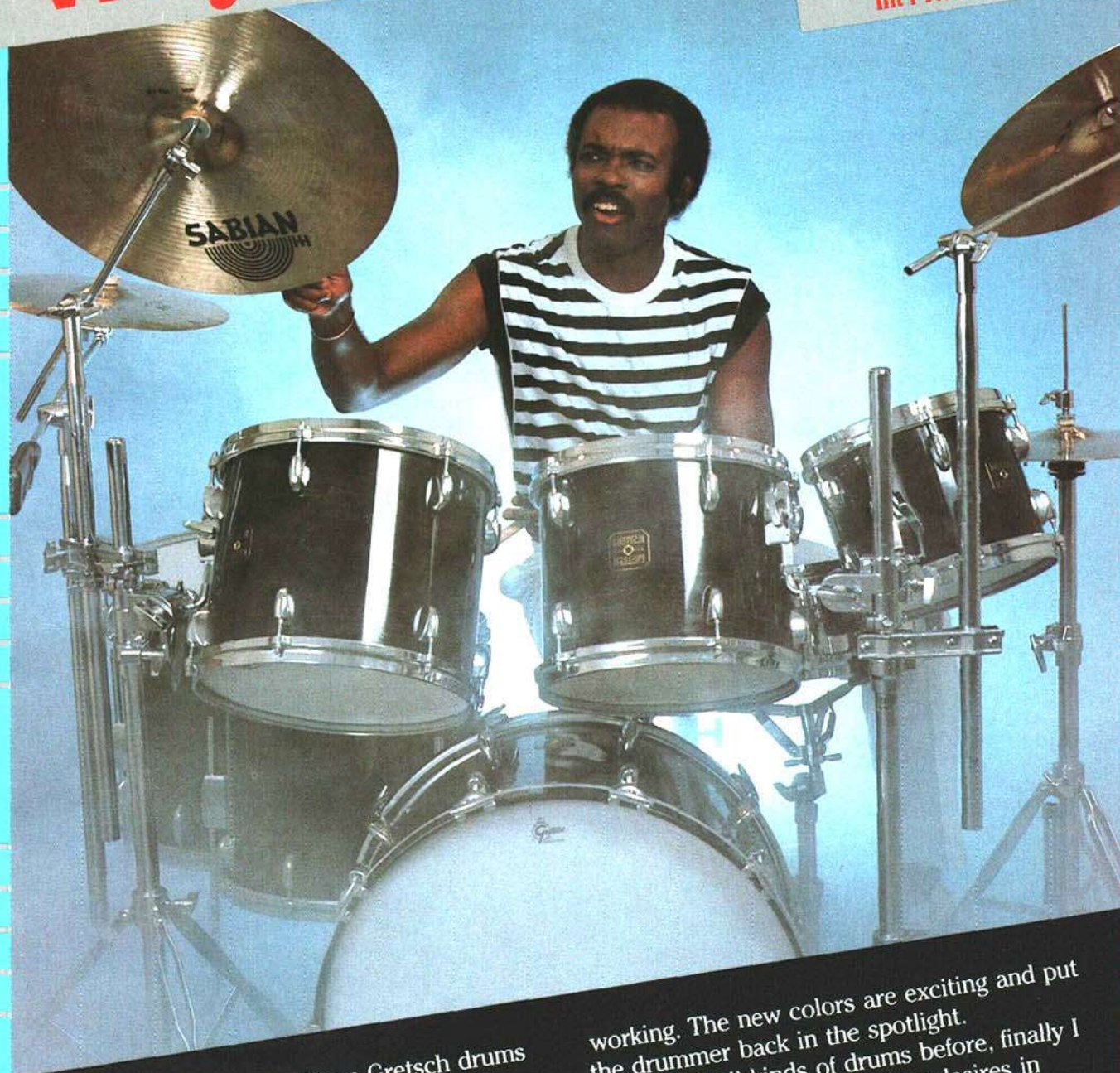
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